CHICAGO USERS GROUP PRESENTS

CHICAGO TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE CHICAGO TI-99/4A USERS GROUP

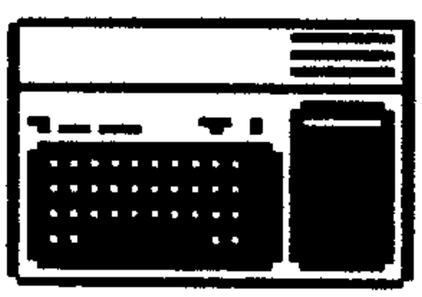
SUPER WINTER ISSUE
FAIRE PICTURES INSIDE

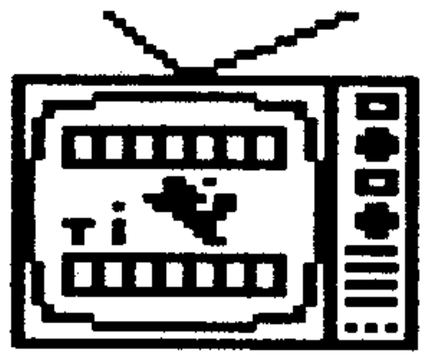
NOV 30-DEC 1, 1986
EDITOR: Carole Goldstein

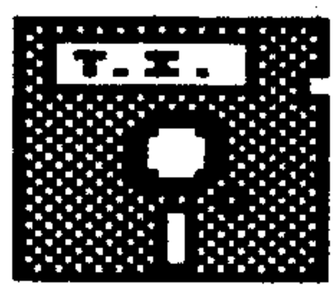
EXTRA DAN G. ニュース アラート EXTRA DAN G.

TO...

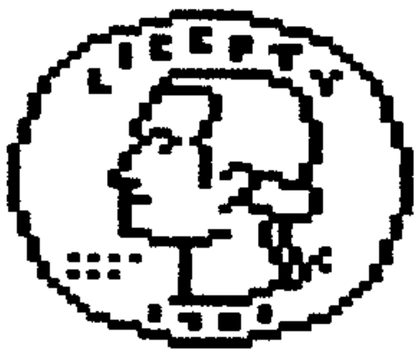
BRING YOUR USED

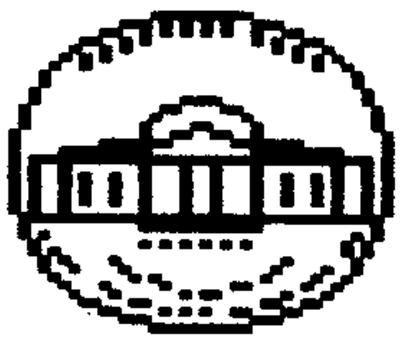
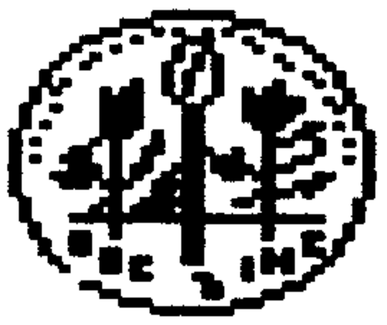






AND YOUR EXTRA



AND COME TO THE SWAP MEET

THE DECEMBER MEETING- - -
will be held on Saturday DEC. 6, 1986 from 1:00 to 3:00 in the Fireside Lounge at Triton College. This meeting will feature our annual flea market, demo of Megatronic Gram Card and elections.

RAVE 99

JUST IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS! Treat yourself to the first keyboard upgrade for your 99/4A. Your word processing and spreadsheets never had it so good! All RAVE 99 Keyboard Enhancements come with an easy to install interface card that installs easily inside your computer console. No soldering required. It works with any system because it connects to the computer. PE Box NOT REQUIRED.

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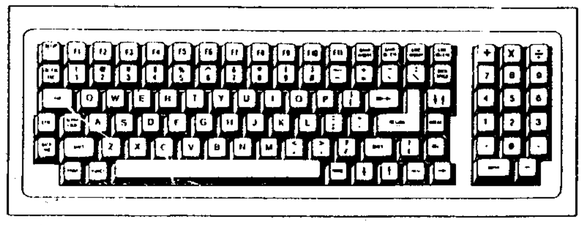

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* Full featured key layout with 101 keys. Four separate key assignment modes built in allowing one key input for nearly all TI WRITER and MULTIPLAN commands.

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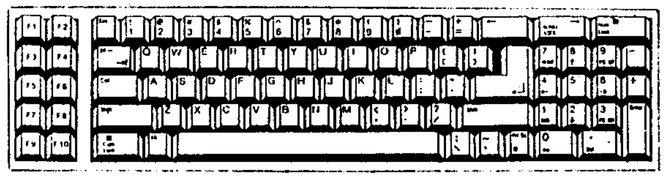
MODEL 99/84



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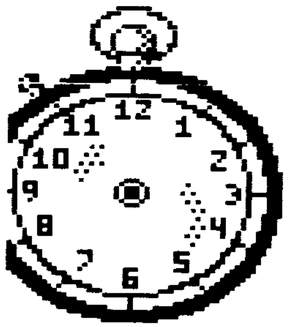
Cover art by Dan Gronowski
Photos by Rich Klein

BULLETINS:

As far as I know the Beginners SIG will meet shortly after the meeting.

The Chicago TImes is published 10 TImes a year, monthly, except during June and July. Chicago TImes is not affiliated with Texas Instruments in any way and is supported only by its subscribers and advertisers. Subscriptions are free with membership in the Chicago TI99/4A User's Group. The Chicago TImes is also distributed free to any other User's Group that wishes to reciprocate. Articles contained herein may be re-printed by another User's Group Publication provided credit is given to the Chicago TImes as the original source of the article. Comments and letters are welcome, as is the submission of original articles and programs.

Except for any advertising and occasional paste-up articles all pages are created on the TI99/4A computer using TI Writer, or Funnelwriter (Funnelweb Farm) for text and TI-Artist (Inscebot) and Artist companion disks from Inscebot and Asgard Software. All original artwork unless otherwise credited is the talent of Buzz Krantz.



THE DISASSEMBLY

Dave Wakely

Faire 4 reflections; Swap-A-Rama; Elections; Who's Texincia?

Every year now it seems, it can be said about our annual TI Faire that it is all over much too quickly. Although the hours were expanded this year from 9AM to 6PM, there just wasn't time enough to see all there was to see or hear all there was to hear. We are giving serious consideration to expanding next year's Chicago TI Faire into a two day "TI Conference", where justice can be done to the amazing resourcefulness of the 99/4A community.

The above paragraph just about summarizes all the shortcomings of the just completed 4th Chicago TI Faire. That the '86 Faire was a success can be judged from the various comments appearing on Compuserve, The Source, and wherever TI users communicate. I suppose we could congratulate ourselves on all the hard work the members of the Chicago TI User's Group put into the Faire, and we would have justification for doing so. But then, we should also thank our geographic location which allowed so many TI Users from all around the country to attend, and in fact we do thank you all for coming and contributing to the collective success of this event.

By now TI users everywhere are aware that news of our initial Faire back in 1983, and the subsequent ones has spawned TI Faires from New England to Australia, where TI owners can keep alive the usefulness of the best home computer ever built. But somehow, and I admit to extreme prejudice on this, the Chicago Faire seems special, as perhaps symbolizing the transition of 99/4A influence from corporate Texas Instruments to the various TI User Groups around the country. The Faire can be seen as proof that we neither miss nor need Texas Instruments, Inc. any more. Thank you, TI, but the users will take it from here.

Mind you, we have had a lot of help, and many of the helpers are now known as "vendors". The average user may not realize that some people out there have poured literally thousands of hours of work and thousands of dollars of their money into the 99/4A. They could have been producing software and other products for the now-generic IBM/clones, or other computers still in production, so why TI? No TI user I have ever spoken to has been able to exactly pinpoint the reasons for the "TI mystique", but we sure seem to have one. The Source is now advertising the TI SIG as a way to "maintain your classic" TI, complete with a picture of a Ford Model T. It seems a clever advertising bit, but underscores the fact that this "dead" computer has just about become a legend, a fact which is occasionally acknowledged even by non-TI users.

Those attending this Faire did some repaying of the vendors in terms of the dollar amounts they spent. For the record, our official attendance this year was about the same as last year. Reports from the vendors, however, indicate that this year's group apparently bought more hardware and software than last year's. Those purchases are both a vendor's reward for staying with the machine as well as encouragement to continue working with it. A lot of you at the Faire gave the vendors a lot to be encouraged about.

The various TI Faires serve other functions as well. With how many other personal computers will a user get to meet and give feedback to the authors or builders of the various software/hardware products he uses? Can you imagine an IBM/clone user telling the author of a "professional" piece of software what's wrong with it, and then being told, "I'll send you an update that will fix that"? It won't happen because TI users have BETTER support for their machines than users of the most advanced AT+++ machines. ("I'm sorry, sir, you want what? Support for our product you bought? We can't do that. You see, our product is sanitized and hermetically sealed in its envelope. And no, you can't talk to the author, he has been sanitized and hermetically sealed in his office.") Interesting, isn't it, that one machine supposedly has "open access" for its users, while the other was supposedly "closed". The Faire provides an opportunity to see and hear what the authors and builders have to say, and to let them know what you want. Perhaps it is this end of the Faire that we can expand in the future, giving more explicit time for "user feedback" to those imaginative vendors who have stayed with us.

The Faire also looked a lot like last year's, when we apparently made the jump from local show to a much larger "TI event". Except this year there were a total of 30 different vendors, and we had to use some imagination to get them all into the exhibit room. Still, there appeared to be enough room for everyone to get around to each table sooner or later, and we managed to hold the presentations upstairs almost on schedule. In all, the actual running of the Faire went about as well as could be expected.

For the second year in a row the most-attended presentation was by Lou Philips of Myarc, Inc. If you have no idea why this should be so, you haven't been paying much attention the past few years. I would guess that there are a little over 200 of those bulky chairs in the Fireside Lounge, and with the small chairs, those standing, and those sitting on the floor, that there were in excess of 400 people on hand for this presentation alone. The other presentations were only slightly less well attended, except perhaps for the Mechatronics demo late in the afternoon. We should have learned our lesson last year when the New Horizon's group was also scheduled late in the day and drew only a handful of people. Next year expect to see the product demos earlier, with later times reserved for those TI die-hards who will always be around at the end.

A last minute schedule addition was the user group forum at 12:15. We were somewhat surprised at the turnout by members of groups from around the country who came to this gathering to talk about the problems and frustrations of organizing and running a TI user group. There were lots of suggestions and sharing of ideas, and perhaps what came of this was that different groups have hit upon some unique solutions to the running of their activities. By far the largest problem expressed was getting participation from the members. Typically, it seems, a small number of members of most TI user groups does the bulk of the work, and obtaining volunteers to help out is quite difficult. The Chicago group handles this

by a "draft" system. Former president Sam Pincus pioneered a method whereby at a moment unknown to a user who might be asking some question about his machine, Sam would both answer the question and simultaneously inform the user that he had also volunteered to serve on some new or existing committee. The members have taken this reasonably well, and no, it has not decreased the number of questions asked.

I can't, at this time, tell you a whole lot about the contents of most of the other presentations. After making speaker introductions my presence was usually required elsewhere to help solve some problem or answer some question. When I get the chance to view the videotape of the talks I may have more to say about the speakers and what they had to say. The tape, incidentally, when the editing is finished, will include footage of all of the Faire activities, including all presentations. Interested user groups or others may obtain a copy (VHS format) by sending $25.00 to the group at the return address on this newsletter. There is no need to send anything else, since the $25 includes both the tape and return mail postage.

Back on the main floor of the Faire, there were the crowds around each vendor table, just as predicted. With more tables to choose from, however, it seemed that eventually getting up to the table itself was perhaps a little easier than last year. Somehow enough equipment eventually got around to each vendor, and we appreciated the patience of some, such as Rave 99, who had to wait while we scrambled for another system for them. Hank Ellermann did a great job of lining up a small truckful of TI consoles, PE boxes, monitors, etc., for everyone to use.

Our condolences to Mechatronics. They had the 80-column card up and running for awhile, but some time during the show the system they were using blew out. I was assured by Franz Waggenbach that this was unrelated to the 80-column card, and seemed to be in the console they were using, but it probably just had to happen to someone at the Faire, and it just happened to be them. It should be noted that this product as well as their GRAM-CARD are in production and available now from Mechatronics vendors. These people also came a long way to get to our show. I picked up Franz at O'Hare just after he arrived from L.A. on Friday, and the two of us waited at the International Terminal for Bernt Miller, who came in from Germany just for our Faire! The president of Mechantronics had been hoping to come himself, but was delayed in Japan, apparently trying to obtain needed chips for new products. More on this and them at the next meeting.

Well known "TI people" from all over could once again be seen at the Faire. For example, I am getting ready to propose that Bob Boone from the Ottawa TI Users Group be given honorary membership status in the Chicago group since we see him so often down here (but only if he wears his cowboy hat). I was told that Ron Albright of "Orphan Cronicles" fame was in attendance but was pinned down much of the day at the Compuserve booth. Officers from various TI user groups around the country said hello, and I was finally able to put faces together with names I had only seen in print or voices I had only heard on the phone. Again, our many thanks to those of you from all over who came here and helped make the Faire such a success. We also agreed, at the User Group forum, to keep in touch via our newsletters. We will also publicize to our members the various Faires that you are doing around the country.

I'll have more about the Faire next month, but no mention of it at all would be complete without acknowledging the enormous amount of work put

into it by Sandy Bartels. Clearly our two largest, most successful and most well reviewed Faires have been the last two. It is no accident that both of them were chaired by Sandy. My only regret is that she has already told us she won't be in charge next year, but I understand the rest of the Bartels family feels relieved. Knowing she would not be in this position next year, however, Sandy had the foresight to line up her successor, Sheila Baumann. That kind of thoughtfulness characterizes Sandy personally, for those of you who don't know her. She is running for group president at the December meeting, a job which actually entails less work than Faire chairperson. Her election should be her reward for two Faires well done.

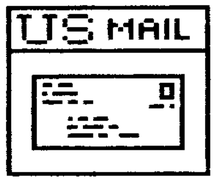
The group wishes to thank the entire Executive Committee, all of whom were involved in the Faire in one capacity or another. Most notable at the Faire itself were Don Jones, who did nearly day-long duty at the group booth outside the door, both Pincus's for their button and T-shirt table, and especially to Bob Demeter and the Library group, who copied something over 800 disks in preparation for the Faire. My personal thanks to Buzz and the Usual Crew for their assistance with set-up and take-down of the room, you did great. The rest of you know who you are, and you have the group's thanks.

VOTE: It is time for the annual group elections, meaning the office of President of the group. Other Exec. committee members are volunteers. Announced candidates so far as I know are: Sandy Bartels. However, there was some talk last year of automatically making the Faire Chairperson the following year group President, which would mean that Sheila Baumann is actually the person running for President (Elect), since she has agreed to chair next year's Faire. Is this clear? At the meeting we will use parliamentary procedure to straighten this out, field some nominations, and somehow hold an election. If you are interested in this position, make your intentions known to the E. Comm. sometime before the meeting starts.

NEXT: Remember the October meeting that got cancelled because of the flood? What we were going to do at that meeting was demonstrate the Mechatronics GRAM-CARD graciously on loan to us from T.A.P.E. We had promised to return it at the Faire, but when we explained that our meeting was cancelled, they agreed to let us keep it one more month until we could show it. It has been in the hands of Hank Ellermann and Rich Klein for some time now, and they will be doing a demo at the December meeting. ALSO, this is the meeting where we have our annual "Swap-A-Rama". Now that you have your Faire purchases sorted out, you may well find yourself with some extra hardware or software. Package it up (originals only, no copies, please) and bring it to the meeting. We will have tables set up for you to display your wares and make your deal. This is open only to members of the group. This is also assuming some of you have some money left after the Faire.

SubrouTInes: Some time back I think I said I was going to devote some column space to the history of the group. After thinking it over, I have decided not to bore anyone with the details. Back to the future!...In re-reading Rich Klein's Sept. column about fixing files on disk I've decided I just love the part where he suggests that we "convert the number to BINARY...(then later) convert that value back to HEXADECIMAL and write it to the disk." And just how do I do this with my 5-function Sharp desk calculator, Rich? Or can everyone except me convert BIN to DEC to HEX in their heads? (Actually, this was one of Rich's more ambitious and well

done columns)...I am informed that this issue will be something of a "bonus surprise" from our NL editor. Next, a "Super Spring Issue", a "Super Fall Issue", a "Super Ground Hog Day Issue", etc...Well, that about does it, except before I forget to mention this, you should know that I am now sure I know who Texincia really is. I'll present my mostly irrefutable evidence next month...



LETTERS

The Fourth annual TI-Faire has now been held, and again I sit here before my TI computer for the second year to thank the peope who helped me make the Faire a smashing success. I believe that our Faire is still the biggest and the best. The main reason that our Faire continues to be the biggest and the best, is the members in our group.

I would first like to thank my chairmen. The Faire has grown so big that one person cannot do the job by himself anymore, so I divided the work into catagories, and asked different people if they would take responsibility for one particular area. First there was Publicity which was run by Mike Chappell. Mike I thank you for the hours of work you put into the Faire. He had the best publisized Faire yet. Mike also took care of acquiring the T-shirts and the button machine for our booth, in addition he handled the microphone for the announcements during the Faire. I also want to thank Mike for the lovely wooden sign that he made for the group. It was set up at the entrance of this year's Faire. Dave Wakely was in charge of the guest speakers, floor design, set-up and break-down, and besides all of those jobs, Dave was the person I called when I began to panic when something started to go wrong. His cool head and calm personality always pulled me through. THANK YOU DAVE, YOU SAVED MY LIFE MANY TIMES THIS YEAR. Hank Ellerman had one of the hardest jobs of the Faire. His job was acquiring the equipment we needed for the vendors, our booths, and the equipment needed for the guest speakers. It is always hard to have to persuade people to give you the use of their equipment. You beg, you plead, and the day of the Faire you stand there and pray that the people that said that they would bring their equipment show up, because if they don't you will be short, and something won't be able to be done.

At this time let me thank the people that brought their equipment for the Faire. You can all pat yourselves on the back. All of you did a great job. Hank, I know how hard you worked getting all the equipment we needed, and I thank you again. Ken Knapp was in charge of vendors trans portation from the hotel and back again. This was a new sevice our club provided for vendors, and the vendors that used it where very thankful for all your help. I also want to thank the people that volunteered their vans to be used for this service. The membership booth was run again by Don Jones, and was, as always, superbly done. Don is one of the most dependable people I know. Thanks Don. Al Stump ran a beautiful program, and I would like to thank him here publicly for all the time and trouble he went through to produce it.

I want to thank Bob Demeter for the excellent way he handled the library booth. All the work you put into the library really did pay off. Ken Czerwinski is another person who devoted a lot of time so our Faire could be the success it was. Ken set up all the arrangements with the college and on the day of the Faire he was right there to see that everthing we needed for our speakers was in place, including the "vanishing" monitors. Thank you Ken. This year we tried to house all the vendors at one motel, and the person that took care of making all their reservations was Tom Kaar. This took a lot of time and I'm happy to say that you did a great job Tom. I want to say thank you to Sam and his wife for spending the whole day running the T-shrit and botton booth. I don't think they even got a lunch break. Len Royner and his wife Lorrie ran the main entrance door all day long. This job is a lot harder then most people think. I know, because I've done it. Nancy Rauch, a new member, and my good friend, ran the hospitality room all Friday

Night, along with the help of Pam Krantz. Buzz Krantz did the banners and the table labels for me, and pretended to be a roustabout during setup and takedown. I would like to thank Grant Schmalgemeier. Grant did so many different things for me that I can't list them all. No job was to big or to small, and Grant never said no to me when I needed something. As everyone knows our meeting before the faire was cancelled because of the massive quantity of rain, so I wasn't sure how many people would show up to help set the Faire up. As always our members came through. We had plenty of help Saturday morning, and evening. To all the members that worked so hard let me again say thanks... Sandy Bartels

The following are messages taken off of Compuserve after our FAIRE.

#: 93588 SI/TI News Views 01-Nov-86 14:45:35 Sb: The Faire!!! Fm: Ron Albright 75166,2473 To: All

Well, folks, I am here at the TI Faire and I can tell you that I feel this is gonna be the best Faire YET!

There has got to be 2000+ cruisin' here and it is packed ABSOLUTELY!

The vendors are doing a brisk business and the folks are buying like crazy!

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

This lil' orphan is, indeed, ALIVE AND WELL!

I hope to be able to be up tonight and get something ONLINE but we will have to see how that goes...

ANYWAY, I can say unequivocaly, that the TI FAire #4 is a BIG SUCCESS.

Thanks to the Chicago UG for making this another beauty!

Back with more later!

'bones

#: 93592 SI/TI News Views 01-Nov-86 15:46:44 Sb: FAIRE REPORT #2 Fm: Ron Albright 75166,2473 To: ALL

LOU PHILLIPS JUST FINished his presentation and (from what I gathered) not much is new...they HOPE that they can begin shipopping prior to the end of the year, but the hang up is Mitsubishi...the "gate array" was wrong the first time and they are being re-done.

Nice presentation by ASGARD software earlier and a TI User Group seminar on problems that face them all, and an EXCELLENT presentation by Clint Pulley on c99...a VERY bright guy for sure.

The Faire is STILL smokin' and the crowds are big. I mean REALLY big. If I had to estimate, I would say well over 2000 total attendance throughout the day.

Again, it has been another BIG success.

I have seen Art Byers, Terrie Masters, Coe Case, Warren Agee, Gary Cos, Todd Kaplan and MANY more of the CIS friends.

Its been a great day and it is still goin...

Out here!

'bones

Enter command, N for next message or <CR> for menu !N

#: 93594 SI/TI News Views 01-Nov-86 18:06:16 Sb: FAIR REPORT #3 Fm: Ron Albright 75166,2473 To: ALL

JUST BOT THE WORD ON ATTENDANCE...

Seems over 900 folks turned the turnstiles here in the Windy City...the fair organizers attributed the lower attendance (compared to last year) to the inclemant weather (a polite way to say the weather was miserable!!)...the sellers on the other hand are VERY pleased...each and everyone has virtually sold out. They have literally sold it all! This has been the most "spend-thrift" TI Fair of all...I mean that!

It has become a seemingly CULT life for the TI...selling everything from adoption certificates to buttons and (one UG representative - Dick Vandenberg - of the Mid-South UG - estimated a $75/member expenditure for their 11 attendees)...spend, spend, spend!

a Fifth Annual TI Faire for next year! They love it, the vendors love it, and

Anyway, "a great time was had by all!!"

#: 93630 S1/TI News Views 02-Nov-86 14:41:26 Sb: RM 77 Fm: ART BYERS 73157,3017 To: .LM 0

ALL CHICAGO TI FAIR NOV 1st The fourth annual TI Fair hosted by the Chicago TI UG was a fine success from all points of view: Around 900 99/4A owner/users from the middle of the nation (and as far away as Boston, Washington DC and New York) had a chance to see the newest and best in software and hardware and to spend some money on goodies. So- The Vendors obviously did a great deal of business and will be encouraged to attend other TI shows around the nation. The speakers and events were interesting and well run. Those attending learned much that was new. Best of all, however, was the chance to meet and mix with the 99'er community, to exchange ideas and information, and to renew our enthusiam as we proved once again the motto originated by Henry Hein: "We may be an Orphan, but we have a great future!". For me, the occasion meant putting faces together with many of the famous names such as Chris Bobbit (Asgard), Jim Horn and Jeff Guide (Disk Only Software, Ron Albright (The Orphan Chronicles), Theresa Masters (president o the LA UG),- plus well-known programmers such as Peter Hoddie, Coe Case, Todd Kaplan, and Paul Charlton, - oh yes! and the Tigercub Himself and the most well known of them all, Jim Peterson. Without Jim half of most UG newsletters would be blank space! It was nice to talk to Walt Howe and Bob Demeter in person, instead via Telecom. What was new? Oh Boy! Lots was new! J Peter Hoddie has a new Graphics program "Font Writer" being marketed by Asgard. ("What! another graphics proram" you are about to say..- but you have to see it to belive it.) That was only a start. There must have been 50 new software items offered by vendors covering everything from games and education to disk utilities and home finance. Continued next message.

#: 93634 S1/TI News Views 02-Nov-86 14:50:04 Sb: #CHICAGO FAIR CONTINUED Fm: ART BYERS 73157,3017 To: ALL

STILL SLEEPY WHEN I U/L THIS EXCUSE THE BOOFS BOT IN AT 3AM. DataBiotics long-awaited PILOT language with extensive documenation was finished and on sale Plus Super Forth. New Hardware?? Yes and plenty of it! Mini PE Boxes for 3,4 or 5 cards, and prototypes of everything from a sort of super widget that enables you to use the "Review Module Library" hidden software built into the Console to a whole new Computer (MYarc 9604). One of the big hits of the show was the new IBM type keyboard for our 99/4A, made by RAVE Mfg. I have an interview on tape with one of the principals involved and will print it in detail in the CALL SOUNDS newsletter. During the lunch break, there was a fascinating rap session for the visiting UG representatives. Everything was covered from rumors of more software to be released to PD and UG's by Texas Instrument (a diagnostic disk) to fundraising and dues policies, methods of software library distribution, and newsletter exchange. One of the best talk/demonstrations of the day was the hour on Music and the 99/4A, put on by J Peter Hoddie. That included two linked computers playing music together, music that played while you are programming, and two pieces where Peter played the Cello accompanied by the 99/4A!!! All in all, the Chicago club is to be highly complimented. Everything ran smoothly. Those of you who could not make this show are advised to make the next one near you, be it Seattle, Boston, Dallas or New Jersey. These fairs are FUN!!

-ART

*** There is a reply: 93636

Enter command, N for next message or <CR> for menu !N

#: 93636 S1/TI News Views 02-Nov-86 14:58:21 Sb: #93634-CHICAGO FAIR CONTINUED Fm: Ron Albright 75166,2473 To: ART BYERS 73157,3017 (X)

Couldn't agree with you more, Art..great fun for sure!!

I think one of the most exciting announcements was the teaming of two REAL genuises together in future software/hardware projects..

Baryy Traver and J. Peter Hoddie...that team is unbeatable for sure.

Enjoyed meeting you my friend!

#: 93708 SO/General/Haalp! 03-Nov-86 19:26:34 Sb: #93533-#:) Fm: CYNTHIA BECKER 76625,1133 To: BOB DEMETER 73307,3705 (X)

This was quite a show! Too bad there were so many people smoking in the vending area! Imagine it: in a commercial establishment where computers are used, there is no smoking allowed! Do we have so little regard for our "ORPHANS", that we mess them up with ashes? Not only that, I had the worst sore throat & congestion after that day than if I had a cold! My sinuses were so irritated as well as my eyes! This would have been more enjoyable for me had no smoking been allowed in this area. If folks wanted to use that filthy weed, let 'em go outside! In such a closed in area, air-quality is at a premium! There's my feelings on the matter! Aside from that, it was most enjoyable, especially being able to meet folks I had only "chatted" with; speaking of which, "YOU LOOKED TALLER IN CHAT!" :) Seriously, it was nice to meet you all!

#: 93709 S1/TI News Views 03-Nov-86 19:27:23 Sb: #Reflections on Chicago Fm: Howie Rosenberg <EMB> 74216,1640 To: ALL

To those who attended the Chicago Faire, it was apparent that we are strong and healthy. There is every sign that we will be so for an indefinite time, despite some of the doom and gloom that we have been hearing as of late. There are some signs that a metamorphosis is changing the TI community into a cult. Bumper stickers, and I love my TI-99/4A hats at the Faire are some of the superficial indicators of the cult. A more important indicator is the enthusiasm and $$ spent on a pdead" machine. One very noticeable fact for any forum regular was the large number of forum members both present and past who were at the Faire. Monte Schmidt, Tod Kaplan, John Behnke, and Teresa Masters were the previous forum members who I noticed. I hope that they all rejoin us in the future. The list of present forum members is too long to fit into a meesage. Jim Horn, Jeff Guide, Barry Traver, Ron Albright, Coe Case, Art Byers, Rory Binkerd, Barry Boone, Richard Nichell, Warren Agee, Paul Charlton, Richard Roseen, Chris Bobbit, Walt Howe, Clint Pulley and Cynthia Becker to name a few. Several other folk with whom I spoke told me they were CIS members of the lurker variety. A few awards this year. First most unique costume to Coe Case for his pointed BLACK witches hat. Second most entertaining presentation to Peter Hoddie who also wins the award for most innovative new software at the show (Font Writer and Kracker Packer). I bought 'em both and will report on 'em as soon as I get time to fool with 'em a bit. Thanks to the Chicago group for their hospitality, for the work required in producing the Faire, and for the vitality which that obviously have and which is necessary to preserve our orphanage and our cult.

#: 93842 SO/General/Haalp! 05-Nov-86 19:26:33 Sb: Chicago Thanks Fm: Jeff - D.O.S. - Pg TDB-4 70007,1635 To: ALL

Disk Only Software would like to thank those of you that stopped by our booth in Chicago and said hello. Sorry if we couldn't chat longer, but we never slowed down for a minute, but I did make it a point to visit as many other dealers as possible and sneak a peek at name badges to introduce myself to names I recognized. We thank everyone for a sucessful Faire and hope to see you all again next

year!

Thanks.... Jeff Guide

#: 93924 SO/General/Help! 06-Nov-86 21:31:00 Sb: #93893-FAIRE TAPE??? Fm: Walt Howe 70277,3530 To: FO ALL

Tom and ALL, Corson Wyman of the Boston Computer Society and MUNCH groups made a high quality tape at the Chicago Faire. The picture and sound are both excellent. It runs about two hours and includes a tour of the Faire and both MYARC's and Peter Hoddie's presentations. It should be just what you're looking for. I just called him to check if he was willing to make copies, and he says he'll be glad to if you send him a blank VHS tape and return postage (PLEASE). This offer applies to anyone who would like the tape. Send the blank tape to Genial Computerware, P.O. BOX 183, Grafton, MA 01519. This is the same address to send to for Peter Hoddie's versatile new GRAM PACKER program, which will install program image files (E/A 5-type) and saved cartridges in the GRAM KRACKER or pack numerous short loaders for the same that will all appear on the main menu. For the GRAM PACKER, send $10 plus $1 for postage. More than 50 of these were sold in Chicago and Milwaukee.

#: 93993 S1/TI News Views 07-Nov-86 22:33:51 Sb: NEWS OF TICOFF'87 Fm: TICOFF'87 73547,2014 To: ALL

Texas Instrument Computer Owners Fun Fair A Co-op effort of six TI 99/4A clubs of NJ and NY.

TICOFF'87 extends congratulations to the Chicago UG on their Excellent Nov 1st Fair. We will try hard to meet and beat the high standard they set.

(1) Please note this special CIS number for contacting TICOFF 1987. We suggest you leave your inquiries via E-mail. 73547,2014

(2) As was TICOFF'86, this event is non-profit and net proceeds go to the Roselle Park (NJ) High School Student Council Scholarship Fund.

(3) Set the Date Aside: Saturday, March 28th, 1987.

(4) Even at this early date, TI Vendors have begun to sign up. Already in are Disk Only Software, Myarc, Tigercub Software, - with more arriving in the mail each week.

(5) Steve Citron, President of NEWJUG (New Jersey UG) and Special Events and Speakers Chairman, has announced the following Speakers: Lou Phillips, Paul Charlton, Barry Boone, Jay Holovacs, J Peter Hoddie, and Jim Horn. Steve is also planning the *First International Meeting of User Groups* Topics of discussion will be: The Future of TI User Groups, Possible formation of a Super User Group, and Information Exchange -how to do it best! Moderators for the meeting will be Jay S. Leber, Art Byers and Steve Citron.

MEETING DATES FOR THE COMING YEAR:

Jan 10 (Ironwood room)	June 6
Feb 7	Sept 12
Mar 14	Oct 3
Apr 4	Nov 7 (5th Annual TI FAIRE)
May 2 (Ironwood room)	Dec 5

BASICALLY YOURS

Rich Klein

Boy am I exhausted after the Faire! All that running around and up and down. We've all got lots of stuff to sort through and I imagine that I've got as much as anybody. Also, I've been "chosen" to do a presentation of the *Brascard* (not to be confused with the Gram Kracker) at the December meeting. This is a difficult device to figure out how to use, since the documentation is so sparse. Also, there is nothing much in the way of utilities to go along with it. Maybe in the future this will change.

Due to all that's happening, and because of my previous lengthy dissertations, this month's discussion will be kept short. It will be a mixed bag of things, nothing monumental in scope.

First, if you have 1) an Epson or Gemini compatible printer; 2) a child in early grammer school; 3) a shortage of that specially lined spelling paper; then the following listing is for you:

```
100 OPEN #1:"PIO"
105 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);"3";CHR$(12)
110 FOR A=1 TO 10
120 RESTORE
130 FOR B=1 TO 3
140 READ X
150 FOR C=1 TO 80
160 PRINT #1:CHR$(X);
170 NEXT C
180 IF B=3 THEN 200
190 PRINT #1:CHR$(10);CHR$(10)
200 NEXT B
210 PRINT #1:CHR$(10)
220 NEXT A
230 CLOSE #1
240 END
250 DATA 241,45,241
```

This humble little submission was born of my need to provide my second grade son with the means to put his teachers thoughts into his own words. It opens a standard (default Display Variable 80) file to the printer and sends out a solid line, a dotted line, and a solid line. It repeats this pattern 10 times and uses a vertical feed of 12/144 inches. If this is not suitable, then change the CHR$(12) in line 105 to however many 144ths of an inch you like up to 127/144.

The characters are read from a DATA statement at the end of the listing and then printed eighty times on one printer line. Obviously this is of little use to many of you, but if you have kids.....

Next on the agenda is a call I received from someone about programs and routines SAVEd in MERGE format. A MERGE file is a special type of file one can create from Extended Basic. This allows one to save a library of routines and subroutines and subprograms in MERGE format and then MERGE them back in memory with a program that already exists in memory. Any BASIC program, whether complete and RUNnable or not can be SAVEd to disk in MERGE format using the following statement:

```
SAVE DSKx.MYSTUFF,MERGE
```

This SAVEs the "program" in DISPLAY, VARIABLE 163 format. Since OLD only loads PROGRAM image, and in Extended Basic's case, INT/VAR 254 files, then obviously you can't load this as a stand-alone program. You can MERGE the program into memory with

the following statement:

MERGE "DSKx.MYSTUFF"

Notice the qoutes. TI wants it done this way, so that's the way we do it. You don't need to have a program in memory to merge a program in, so you can use this as an alternate way to neaten up a program in memory. When you SAVE a program in memory, it's saved sequentially by line numbers and is loaded in order. When you write a program, it is stored in memory exactly the way you wrote it, so if you go back to a line to edit it, the edited line is placed after all the other lines in the program. The computer keeps a line number table to indicate where in memory a certain line is.

However, this can significantly slow a program if the lines are jumbled up. The line will be found and executed all right, but only after a sometimes exhaustive search of the line number table. When a program is SAVED and then later loaded back in, it is in the same order in memory as it was written. If it was patched here and there with editing, then it still is. If you save it in MERGE format, and then later on MERGE it back in, then it will all be straightened out and execute more smoothly, because then the pointer on the line number table can move from one entry to the next without a time consuming search.

One thing to remember is that any MERGEd file MUST have unique line numbering. Any line in the program already in memory will be overwritten if the MERGE file contains the same line number or numbers. This includes any previously MERGEd files, so if you will be MERGing several routines, make sure that each routine has its own line numbering scheme. Usualy line numbers over 10000 (but not more than 32767) are good.

Before we go further, I'd like to apologize for some minor errors and omissions in my last article. That article took me so long to research and write, that only Carole's extended illness allowed me to get it in by the (extended) deadline. Needless to say, when one is rushed, one errs.

Some of the lines presented in the discussion did not match the final listing. This is because when I wrote the program, I did not include some of the fancy options discussed. Those were thought of as the article progressed and then, in my haste to finish, I forgot to incorporate these changes into the listing. I also neglected to inform you that if you follow the device name with a .CR or on the page. And last, but not least, I included a layout of the character array without commenting on it. This is because after I wrote this part, I quit for the night and (again) forgot where I left off. Hey, we're only human, right? The side marked ROW was represented by the first element of the array, and the side marked COLUMN by the second element.

That's about it for this month. As a last note, I'd like to add that MERGE is available only in EXTENDED BASIC, although you can OPEN a file in DISPLAY VARIABLE 163 and read from or write to that file in either TI BASIC OR E/B. What you read will be "tokenized", however, if the file is a MERGE file.

Well, I've got to figure out just how this GRAMCARD works for the meeting. See you then!

PROGRAM CONVERSION

John Behnke

Everyone has the X-Basic Module now! Right? Well if you don't and you have seen some great program that you would like in a magazine or some other article or newsletter but it's written in X-Basic - this article might solve your problem. In this article is a short Basic program that will emulate the two most commonly used features in the X-Basic module - DISPLAY AT and ACCEPT AT. If the program you wish to convert uses any of the SPRITE subroutines you are out of luck because there is no way to emulate those routines in Basic. In this article I will also explain how to simply rewrite the X-Basic program so it will run in Console Basic. Although you will find that the converted program works correctly, you will notice that the program will run at a slower speed due to the inherent slowness of Basic over X-Basic. This Article is dedicated to all those TI'ers out there who only have a console and cassette recorder. Yes! Stand up and shout "I HAVE A $50 COMPUTER AND I'M PROUD OF IT!" I see you people who sneak into meeting and stand in the back. Every month you elect one of yourselves to come up to the library table or a vender and ask "Do you have any NEW program in Basic?" Of course every person within earshot immediately is quiet and looks up to see who the poor soul is and then lets loose a little chuckle. Well, with this program and a little time, you can convert many programs from X-Basic to Basic and build up a nice little collection. I wish you luck. -JB

```
30000 REM ACCEPT AT
30001 COL=COL+2
30010 VAR$=""
30020 IF BEEP=0 THEN 30050
30030 BEEP=0
30040 CALL SOUND(100,1400,0)
30050 FOR @I=0 TO SIZE-1
30060 CALL HCHAR(ROW,COL+@I,
30)
30070 CALL KEY(0,@K,@S)
30080 IF @S=0 THEN 30070
30090 IF (@K>13)+(@I=0)THEN
30150
30100 CALL HCHAR(ROW,COL+@I,
32)
30110 IF @K=13 THEN 30180
30120 @I=@I-1
30130 VAR$=SEG$(VAR$,1,@I)
30140 GOTO 30060
30150 CALL HCHAR(ROW,COL+@I,
@K)
30160 VAR$=VAR$&CHR$(@K)
30170 NEXT @I
30171 SIZE=0
30180 RETURN

31000 REM DISPLAY AT
31010 COL=COL+2
31020 IF BEEP=0 THEN 31050
31030 BEEP=0
31040 CALL SOUND(100,1400,0)
31050 IF SIZE>0 THEN 31070
31060 SIZE=28
31070 CALL HCHAR(ROW,COL,32,
SIZE)
31080 FOR @I=0 TO LEN(VAR$)-
1
31090 CALL HCHAR(ROW,COL+@I,
ASC(SEG$(VAR$,@I+1,1)))
31100 NEXT @I
31110 SIZE=0
31120 RETURN
```

To Use: Type this program in before you start to enter a program. If the program uses the same line numbers, simply RESEQUENCE this program to another area which is not used and note where to GOSUB to when you are typing in the program.

X-BASIC	BASIC
100 ACCEPT AT(10,1):A$ If you want a numeric variable instead of a string variable: use: 104 A=VAL(VAR$)	100 ROW=10 101 COL=1 102 SIZE=28 (Max input length) 103 GOSUB 30000 104 A$=VAR$
100 ACCEPT AT(10,1)SIZE(10) BEEP:A$	100 ROW=10 101 COL=1 102 BEEP=1 (BEEP=1 to beep) 103 SIZE=10 104 GOSUB 30000 105 A$=VAR$
100 DISPLAY AT(10,1):"TEST"	100 ROW=10 101 COL=1 102 VAR$="TEST" 103 GOSUB 31000
100 A$=RPT$("TEST",10)	100 A$="" 101 FOR @I=1 TO 10 102 A$=A$&"TEST" 103 NEXT @I
100 A$=RPT$(B$,C)	100 A$="" 101 FOR @I=1 TO C 102 A$=A$&B$ 103 NEXT @I
100 CALL COLOR(1,10,11,2,11,12)	100 CALL COLOR(1,10,11) 101 CALL COLOR(2,11,12)
100 CALL CHAR(90,"1111111111 11111122222222222222333333 33333333334444444444444444")	100 CALL CHAR(90,"1111111111 111111") 101 CALL CHAR(91,"2222222222 222222") 102 CALL CHAR(92,"3333333333 333333") 103 CALL CHAR(93,"4444444444 444444")
100 A=MAX(B,C)	100 IF B>C THEN 103 101 A=C 102 GOTO 104 103 A=B 104 (continue program)
100 A=MIN(B,C)	100 IF B>C THEN 103 101 A=B 102 GOTO 104 103 A=C 104 (continue program)
100 IF A=0 AND B=0 THEN 200	100 IF (A=0)*(B=0)THEN 200
100 IF A=0 OR B=0 THEN 200	100 IF (A=0)+(B=0)THEN 200

FULL DUPLEX

Irwin Goldstein

Okay, two weeks have now passed since the Fourth Annual CHICAGO TI FAIRE and still our board is buzzing with observations and comments about how terrific everything was.

This is exactly what the BBS is designed to do; relay one's thoughts about developments and happenings concerning our club and the TI world. This is what separates our BBS apart from the Apple, IBM, Commodore, etc boards. Our BBS is run by us, for us, and services the needs of the TI community in particular.

We are really very fortunate to belong to the Chicago Group which has the resources to run and maintain the type of system we are privied to use. It is our membership dues which help to support our BBS, for without the yeary dues, our BBS would go the way of TI West, which will close its doors at the end of next month due to lack of financial support. It is a real shame to see this happen to such a fine system as TI West.

Another sour note we should reflect upon: how is the BBS going to fare against the withdrawal of call packs by Illinoi Bell? Is there going to be a large reduction in the number of callers due to the extra cost of calling from outside the local call zone? I think maybe so, at least for a short time, but then things will get back to normal again. Sort of like when gasoline rose to over one dollar a gallon. People drove less, but then they got use to it and once again returned to their normal routine.

As an inticement for you to keep calling, John Behnke has made a few changes to he BBS to make it more interesting. For one thing, we have added the sections to the main menu which were previously "under construction". You may now read the meeting info, private sections, and info about the BBS.

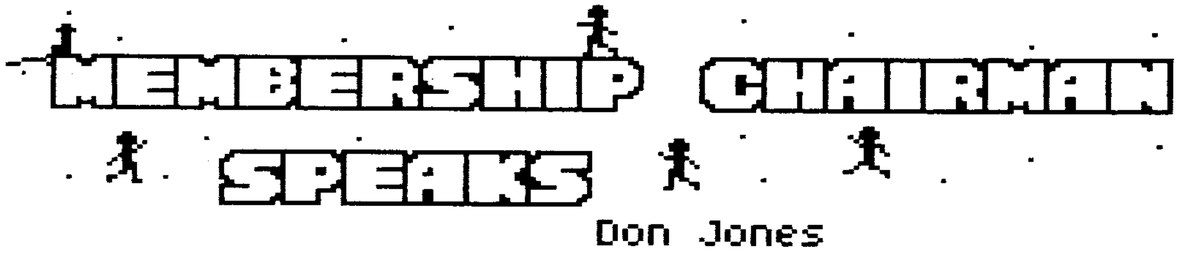
An exciting feature concerns participation by the users as to what is seen in th private and open subboards. I.E. if, as a user, you have something of interest that you feel shoud be in the private or open subboards, simply upload the data as normal and in the

description state that it should be in the open or private subboards. If I agree, it will be put there. Files must be transferred as a TI Writer type file for this to work.

If you use our BBS but do not yet have a password, you may now get to look at you entire download section. That's right, you may look but not touch. To transfer these goodies, you will need that easy to get password. This should intice all you holdouts to request that wonderful little word that can expand your TI world of enjoyment.

There are a few more additions to the system but I don't want to use all my ammo at one time. This will give me something to say next newsletter. Besides, this newsletter is so big this issue that you may not have the time to use the BBS.

Till next time, keep warm and don't forget to call often. As always our number is 312-966-2342. We are ready to serve you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, just like the corner gas station.



Don Jones

Greetings and felicitations, sports fans! Has everyone finally recovered from our great Faire? I bet that a lot of you out there are ready for another one next month. Well, though many of you may be ready for one, the people who worked hard to bring you the last one aren't too ready to do anything except continue to recover. A lot of people forget that an event, such as our Faire, takes a lot of time and a heck of a lot of work. Had it not been for the heroic efforts of Sandy Bartels, there would have been no Faire. Had it not been for the contributions of those of you who volunteered your labor, your time, and your equipment, there would have been no Faire. It's about time that we realize that there's no such thing as a free lunch; somebody has to pay.

Speaking about volunteering and paying, I want to express my deepest gratitute to those kind members who helped me man the membership table. I'm speaking about Ken Knapp, Paul Farber, Al Stump's son and, especially, Nancy Rauch. This lady was most invaluable to me during the Faire. Had it not been for her considerable accounting skills, I would probably still be in the back of the Ironwood Room, biting my nails and chewing the end of my beard. Her organizational skills are phenomenal. I can truly say that I learned things from her that I will surely be putting to use in the future. Thanks a lot Nancy. I don't know where I would have survived without your help.

Thanks to the CREATOR for volunteers! While I'm giving out thanks, let me again thank the following volunteers for having, in the past, made my life a lot easier: Pat Vetter, thanks for taking over my work with the members who volunteer to pass out letters to TI owners in their own zip code areas. Pat prints up a letter which goes to people who are owners of TI computers. She sends copies of this letter with equal numbers of copies of our group's membership guide, and mailing labels, which we got from TI, just as they were

pulling out of the home computer market, to those members who have volunteered and live in the Chicago metropolitan area. The purpose of this activity is to make those people, who still have their machines, but have closeted them, aware of the fact that we exist and that help is available. I feel that this is an important responsibility of a support group such as ours.

I would also like to thank Sheila Baumann for creating her fine bulletin board guide and taking the responsibility of sending it out to those out-of-town members (at the cost of $1.00) who are not non-attending members and therefore do not have a copy of it.

I would also like to thank Ed Svizzero for volunteering to make and mail out cassette tape versions of our sample disk, which goes out to all non-attendng members.

I would like to thank my buddy, Al Stump, for taking over the mailing, the selling, and the distribution of the back issues of our newsletter. New members who register, between January and September of the year, receive all of the back issues of our newsletter since the beginning of the year. Organizing them and sending them out is a thankless but necessary job.

I would like to thank Alan Izzo for volunteering to send out information to those individuals and organizations who would like to know more about our group.

I would like to thank my friend Jan Janowski for volunteering to answer the correspondence which comes to the group directed to me. Quite often, these letters contain problems, which they want answered, or they are requests for advice. This was probably one of the most time consuming things that I had to take care of every month.

I would like to thank Irv Levinson who has volunteered to stuff and send off the new member packets to all new non-attending members.

Lastly, I would like to thank Jim Samanich for recently volunteering to copy the sample disks which we send out to our non-attending members. (Just be sure that you say no if he offers you some free flying lessons.)

You sports fans, out there, may be wondering why I am so grateful for the efforts of the above mentioned people. The reason is quite simple: At one time, in addition to writing this monthly article, managing the data base files for all group members, and putting out a report to the executive board, I was doing all of those things myself. That was the same time that I was contemplating quitting my responsibilities within the group. Sports fans, sometimes I felt that it was a "dog eat dog" world and I was sure that I was wearing "milk bone" underwear. Fortunately for me, everytime that I shouted for help, I received it. This is the reason why I so much enjoy working for the group. I think that it would be difficult for me to find a nicer bunch of people anywhere. It is both a pleasure and an honor to know and work with all of you. It was also great to see some far-away faces, for the first time, at our Faire.

Also, before I forget it, I would like to thank Paul Farber, Barney Kugel, Ken Knapp, and Al Stump for helping me to man the membership table each meeting.

Thanks to those of you who have already renewed your memberships for next year. Here is a last reminder to those of you who haven't yet renewed: The cost of all renewals is $15.00 (over-seas members should add an additional $3.00 for the extra first class, air mail postage). After December 31, the cost becomes $18.00 ($21.00 for over-seas members). By renewing now, you will receive a discount. Renew now and save!

Speaking of saving, I'm still waiting for Texincia to renew her membership. Just think, Texi Boo, for $15.00, you can come and sit in the back of our meeting hall and oogle over all those wonderful hunks. Just think about it and stop being so stingy. (By the way, I

did see her at the Faire, even though she was incognito. I knew it was her by the teeny weenie mini skirt, the bulging biceps, and the steel toed jack boots. You can't fool me, Texi Boo!)

I don't have a lot to say this month (except VOLUNTEER!) and the less said about Texincia the better so I will close this month's article with some of the correspondence which I receive. You might find it interesting:

From Kathy Belala, I received the following nice letter:*"Dear Mr. Jones, when I saw your ad in Micropendium, I was delighted. I have attempted to join one of the three user groups in the Seattle area, but the location of each of the groups made it difficult for me to attend any meetings. When I wrote to the group explaining this, I was snubbed, to put it bluntly. So, when I saw your ad, I was surprised, to say the least. I guess the groups here feel you can't contribute if you don't attend.*

"I am excited about joining a group mostly so that I will have someone to whom I can ask questions who has a TI and not an Apple or an IBM. Being new to the computer, and at my age, it's like teaching an old dog new tricks--but I'm learning and I love my new computer. My project for this winter is to purchase a modem and experience the fun of bulletin boards--my second reason for joining your group.

"I look forward to your newsletter and becoming pen-pals with some other members. (Until I have a modem!) Thank you, Kathy Belala."

Well, Kathy, it's great to have you on board. We also love our machines and we don't care how far away you may live. We will attempt to support your TI habit regardless of the distance! I'm sorry about the attitude and the behavior of those other groups. Now you can clearly see why we are probably the largest TI support group in the world (we presently have almost 600 members).

Also, don't you ever let yourself believe that age is a factor in terms of one's appreciation, understanding, or usage of a computer. Look at Texincia (if you can stand to), she's as old as Moses' toes and twice as corny!

Anyone who wants to correspond to any other members, in your respective areas, please pay attention to the following: It is our group's policy to not give out names, addresses, or telephone numbers of any members. If you do want to make contact, please send a statemeent, to this effect, to our newsletter. We can publish your name, address, and telephone number. In this way, some user(s) close to you can then make contact.

Here's a letter from a TI brother across the waters, in Denmark: *"Dear Don, first of all, thank you for your kind letter of 05/27/86. A long time has passed. You know, summer vacation, garden work, family visits, and so on. But never mind, you have been in my thoughts and I have seen your finger in the Super Summer Issue, so now, I do my duty.*

Enclosed, you will find the application form and a check for, what I understand, is the correct amount.

Well, that was business, but I would not end this letter without telling you how much I appreciate being a member of your club. We had a little club here in Copenhagen, about 20 members, I think, but it was too weak to survive. In this club, I learned about Micropendium (I now am a subscriber), and in this periodical, I saw your announcement.

"I am very proud of the password "DANE" which you have given me. For the time being, I cannot use it, because I have no modem, but we all have our hopes. On the other hand, I have a lot of good and pleasant work ahead of me with your newsletter. I also have some very hard decisions to make from the choices to be made of those programs in your

organized, and I am looking forward to contacting the members in charge of answering questions. That will happen the day that I dare to ask questions at the risk of losing face.

"One day, I hope to visit your club. I have been in the U.S. several times and two or three times in Chicago, so perhaps, I will one day be able to attend a meeting; you never know. I hope you will have a big and successful Faire and I am looking forward to reading about it in the next issue.

"I am happy to be in contact with all of you. I send our club the very best wishes and remain yours, Mogens Fastings.

"P.S. I have not received any back issues so far; anything wrong?"

Hey, sports fans, now, wasn't that a nice letter? It makes me feel good that we can service people so far away. Mogens, (your given name is very significant to me as it is the given name of the great conductor, Mogens Woldike) it is both a pleasure and an honor to be your brother across the waters. It is also a great pleasure for us to hear from you.

Relative to your request for your back issues, I have contacted our back issues chairman, Al Stump. He will be taking care of getting you your back issues.

I'm sorry that the users' group in Copenhagen didn't survive. It's really nice to have brothers and sisters close by, but such is life.

I'm glad that you are able to take advantage of our library. We have a very efficient new librarian. He will get out any library orders in a very short time. Also, our library is continuing to grow. I hope that our librarian will start writing some short reviews of some of the nicer additions.

Mogens, I hope that you don't ever feel afraid or ashamed to ask questions. We are a support group and the answering of questions is one of our functions. We are here to help each other! That's what it means to be a member of our group. When I first joined, I don't think that there was anyone as dumb as I was; I didn't know anything. It was by reading, attending meetings, experimenting, and asking questions that I began to feel fairly comfortable with my machine. Don't be afraid to send us your questions. I only hope that we can answer them; at least, we will try!

I hope that one day you may be able to visit here and attend one of our meetings. It would be great to introduce you to the group and to talk to you. In fact, if any of our distant brothers and sisters intend on visiting our area, please let us know in advance. There is a chance that we could schedule a presentation, by you, into our meeting.

Not all of the letters which I receive are long ones. Some are merely short notes which accompany membership renewal requests. Lawrence Friar, of Yorklyn, Delaware writes the following: *"Dear Don: Enclosed is my check for $15 for my 1987 dues. I hope this is the first of many yearly renewals, of my membership, in the group. While I cannot usually attend any Group functions, I find that I can schedule a business trip to Chicago that will let me attend the TI-Faire this year. This should let me put some personalities and faces together with the names which I have been seeing in the newsletter. I'm looking forward to at least saying hello to some of you who are making the group newsletter so effective. Keep up the good work; some of us non-programming users really do appreciate the good efforts."*

Ralph H. Schmike, of Lansing, Kansas writes, *"...Thank you for interesting newsletters--keep it up..."*

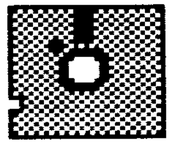
First, I would like to make it clear that our fine newsletter is a result of the many and considerable sacrifices of its editor, Carole Goldstein. Without her efforts, you would be looking at a blank piece of paper.

It's nice to see our distant non-attending members in town during our Faire. I hope that I wasn't rude to anyone during the Faire. If I was, let me apologize now. It was simply that I was under some very heavy pressure to keep things operating smoothly at the membership table. This is also the reason why we had to shut down for 45 minutes. That was the only way that, with the help of Nancy Rauch, I was able to begin to make an accounting of what had come in.

Well, sports fans, I guess that it's time for old Chrome Dome Jones to mosey off into the sunset. Keep the renewals coming in. I hope to hear from more of you in the future.

Have a nice Thanksgiving and when you see a turkey, think of Texincia!

HOLIDAY SHOPPING GUIDE



SOFTWARE REVIEWS

SOFTWARE REVIEWS: Jack Topham

Back in May 1985, I reviewed several DATA BASE MANAGEMENT programs and concluded that ACORN99 was the one to beat. Indeed ACORN99 has remained one of the few really complete data base managers available for the TI99. Since it has remained my bench mark program I will review its features once again.

ACORN99 requires a full system and can be used with one drive or more. I combined the two disks into one and with DS/DD have all the program and data files on one disk. To use ACORN99 you define a dictionary of data items. You then DEFINE a DATABASE made up of as many of the dictionary items as you require. Next, you create the DATABASE file based on the expected No. of records. After data entry you can create subfiles which are created with a very versatile search utility. Files can be sorted using various criteria.

Utilities are provided for transfering data from one data base to another as well as for creating literally any report format. ACORN99 uses much of the OAK TREE DEP which is sold seperately to provide 40 column screens and a terrific data entry facility. ACORN99 has worked flawlessly all this time and my only complaint is that system response time at data entry is a bit slow. Since each of the many utility files have to be loaded each time they are needed, this adds time to the use of the program. My grade for ACORN99 remains an A, however.

Now along comes two new FreeWare programs from two different parts of the TI99 world. I'll start with CREATIVE FILING SYSTEM from Mark Beck in ARKANSAS. CFS has 24 pages of documentation as well as a set of example files that the DOCS walk you thru step by step. A nice touch!
CFS requires a full system and can be loaded using any of the load modules. Two drives or a lot of disk swapping is required. Data goes on one and the CFS files on another. This permits auto load of data files which I find great. Up to 1400 8 line records can be created on one DS/DD disk. Each line can have its own printing default characters. Sub files can be created on user defined criteria. Mailing lables can be printed up to 4 across. Any number of files can be merged together and files can be converted to DV/80 to be used with TIWRITER. Any file can be converted to a TIWRITER VALUE file as well. Mathematical operations can be performed in the REPORT mode. I trust I have wetted your appetite by now.

RECORDS can be up to 16 fields of 14 characters each and are defined in the CREATE mode. With up to 16 field headings of 14 characters each, the record screen is 16 lines. Once the fields are created, you can enter data record by record. Once entered you can display the files in several ways. Start to finish, From start at to end at, selected files, or letter to letter in any field. Sub files can be created in this manner as well. The APPEND mode allows adding more records to a file.

IN the SEARCH mode single or multiple conditions may be used. Since every field is searched,it takes a short while. If any one field only is searched, the search is fast! The CHANGE mode allows records to be edited for changes on a single record or on all records. Up to 1300 records can be sorted on any one or two fields. Even a variable sort is offered if the data is in different fields in different records.

A unique option is GRAPH. If numeric data in one of the fields is preceded by a $ sign and a date is in another field, CFS will display a screen graph in color and/or print out the data. Two graph options are offered.

CFS was designed to use FOUNDATION's 128K card if you have one to increase the speed of SORT and GRAPH. NOTE. . . if you receive a copy of CFS with the files "DISK" and/or "PRINTER" delete them before starting. They will be created uniquely for your system after loading the first time. CFS will print out reports in various ways including mathematical operations on the data. For example, add col 3 and 4 for each line and print total in col 5. Or totaling can be done vertically. And finally, CFS will let you CATALOG 20 disks of up to 50 files each and then use all of CFS utilities to SORT, SEARCH, and REPORT. If you like CFS send $10 to MARK at 166 DELAWARE CIRCLE, JACKSONVILLE, AR 72076.

Another hot data base these days is PRBASE, a personal record management system by William Warren, which has been on the local bulletin boards for download. PRB is a disk-based fast access data base management system where you can design your own record screens, customize up to five tabular report formats, customize mailing labels, in addition to the usual data entry, edit, sort, and Save options.

Data can be located in three ways. A global(all fields) search, by a specified field, or by a unique very fast Index search. All screens can be dumped to printer. PRBASE uses a unique data disk initialization of

either single or double sided single density disks. PRBASE requires a full system and one or two drives. I found two made life very easy, with the data disk in drive 2.

PRBASE, like CFS, loads from any of the command cartridges as well as DM1000, FUNLWRITER, and GRAM KRACKER. XBII? SURE! The CREATE utility is used to set up your database. 21 screen lines of 40 columns may be used. A full screen editor makes the task straight forward. Up to 32 data fields are allowed as long as the total number of characters does not exceed 255. When the data screen is complete it is saved by filename to the data disk. A single sided disk will hold 350 records and a double sided one 710. You can now design one to five tabular report formats and/or a mailing label format. I came back and did mine later without any difficulty.

A system setup mode allows you to input printer name, drive no. of data disk, etc. Printer codes are saved also for each output format. Mr. Warren provides 26 pages of documentation which are clear with an example in detail.

Next, you enter the PRBASE Manager where you enter, edit, sort, and print reports. In addition to all the traditional edit features, PRBASE has a Find String utility for any specified field. That's class! A Help screen displays a command summary so you don't have to keep the DOCS on your lap. Nice #2! PRBASE uses a Memory Index scheme so that any field can be indexed, then sorted. Subsets are created by selective indexing to match criteria specified. The first field is indexed by default on entry.

Please, if you choose to use PRBASE, send $10 to the author at 2373 Ironton St. Aurora, CO 80010.

While each of these Data Base Managers offer unique features, each one more than satisfies all basic requirements. I have my entire Classical Record collection on ACORN99. I have just junked my TI Personal Record Keeping and Personal Report Generator modules in preference of CFS for all my mailing lists. I plan to use PRBASE for all my household records which I have on the very old and very slow DATABASE 500.

Anyone of them can do all my chores but I will work with all three and maybe after awhile settle on just one, but I doubt it.I really wish all three used common data files. Wouldn't that be loverly!

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Lets start with the idea that the use of a computer can become increasingly productive when there is synergism of software packages. By this we mean that the value of a set programs is greater than the sum of them alone. This occurs when programs can use common data bases, and are interactive. Features of one compliment the features of another and yet use common data files.

The TI99 has achieved this position in the area of graphics. I want to show you how TI ARTIST, GRAPHX, RLE, and CSGD add up to one unequaled total art/graphic package when used with XBASIC and a new program called FONT WRITER from ASGARD.

I and MICROPENDIUM have both reviewed TI ARTIST, GRAPHX, and CSGD so I will assume that you know that these are first class programs offering similar but yet different art tools for the 99/4A. RLE programs are newer and benefit from commercial devices that can convert any drawing, photo, etc. into a run length encoded data file. There must be nearly 1000 such files by now. Hank told me his collection was on 21 disks!

Data files for these programs vary in format so we must be able to do conversions easily. And we can. TI ARTIST will load TIA, GRAPHX, DRAW N PLOT, and DRAW A BIT files and then convert them to any of the other three file formats. RLE3 will automatically load a TIA, GRAPHX, D/V80, or D/F128 file. You can then save it to any one of the other three. RLE files are often D/V80 or D/F128 but they all can be used. GRAPHX pics are PROGRAM of 54 sectors length. TIA pics use 2 files, both PROGRAM. One for the pic itself, and one for the color information. Both are 25 sectors long. A CSGD picture uses the INT/VAR254 format but that ok as well. FONT WRITER will make conversions between TI ARTIST INSTANCES and FONTS and CSGD GRAPHICS and FONTS.
OK---- I have shown you that all the files generated for each of the top graphics programs can be converted for use on any or all.

Now lets look at what we can do with all these files of wonderful art. Paul Charlton wrote GRAPHX SLIDE SHOW which is distributed by ASGARD. This neat little program will present each GRAPHX picture on the disk one after another. I have three DS/DD disks with 29 pics on each one. Makes a nice show or a quick review of what you have.
TEXAMENT offers ARTISTS CONNECTION on their ARTIST COMPANION #2 which allows you to add a TI ARTIST instance to your BASIC or XBASIC program. It saves the picture starting at the line number you specify. Works great.

Chris Faherty who wrote TIA also wrote a great demo for the MYARK XBII system.
It includes a neat sub program for displaying TIA pictures. Remember that since we can convert these files at will we can use any art file created by these prior mentioned programs. Also remember that a TIA instance can be a selected part of TIA picture so the beat goes on. At this point we can print pictures, messages, banners, etc. using RLE, TIA, or GRAPHX. Each has its own merits and features. The versatility is endless. We got synergism!

Now enters FONT WRITER's big gun. Early this year MICROPENDIUM had an article on creating TIWRITER D/V80 files from an graphics file. Anne Dhein of the NE IOWA UG has been writing articles on the work she has done in creating TI WRITER GRAPHICS, using the TIW transliterate feature. She has done the detailed layout using graph paper, etc to use TI ARTIST files in TIW. TRIO+ has also produced a program to do this with a lot less manual effort. But FONT MAKER has taken over. You simply use the TIW EDITOR and create a simple set of formatter commands using those of the TIW plus a few more. You can use your printers text characters, and/or any font and put graphics and text wherever you please. A dream come true.
Several examples are included which get you going in minutes. Its a piece of cake. If you load in a FONT without a formatter file, you default to the keyboard. As you type a line and enter, the words are printed in the special font. I have done it up to 1 inch high letters. This is a super feature. But I am not finished yet. FW also lets you create fonts. It uses MACROS for standard art strokes and you can

create MACRO files to your hearts content. If you load in a font you can easily edit each character. The EDITOR is fantastic.

ASGARD $25, and worth much more. I cant think of what I cant do with the 99 and yet my total outlay for these programs has been under well below what it would cost for this capability on another machine. Both TEXAMENT and ASGARD are focusing on more and useful art files and utilities. TEXAMENT offers DISPLAY MASTER that allows you to create screen displays using windows, colors, borders, etc. They also have USER DISKs #1, 2, and 3 for CSGD and CSGD is now at Version III. TEXAMENTS also have the latest version of TI ARTIST with new erase features and is now no longer copy protected. They carry a full line of ARTIST's COMPANION #1, 2, and 3 disk sets and ARTIST Extras.

ASGARD supplies GRAPHX COMPANION #1, 2, and 3 as well FONT MASTER. COMPANION disks for TI ARTIST, GRAPHX, and CSGD contain assortments of FONTS, PICS, and GRAPHICS(INSTANCES) as appropriate.

ASGARD SOFTWARE, PO BOX 10306
ROCKVILLE, MD 20850

TEXAMENTS 53 CENTER ST.
PATCHOUGE, NY 11772

With the little space I have left I want to present GRAMPACKER from MILLER GRAPHICS at $10 and written by J. PETER HODDIE for the GRAM KRACKER. I told you recently about GK UTILITY I from MG and all the great things it does including a fabulous improved XBASIC. I have had TI WRITER in Gram 1, E/A in Gram 2, and my customized Operating System in Gram 0. I keep the new XB which I call GKXB in Grams 3-6 which is module space. This left Gram 7 free but not of too much use to me. With GRAM PACKER I now have 5 more menu items on power up like with SUPER CART. I have added DSKU, MASS TRANS, DM 1000, a GK Loader, and TI ARTIST. With all the files in RAM DISK, the 99 is all I could want considering the wealth of software available. Too bad TI, You really blew it. Too bad IBM, I dont need you.

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>DATA BASE MANAGERS=
>FOR THE TI-99/4A=

>By Bill Gaskill=

Some owners/authors of the applications I have covered in this article will, no doubt, be angered by the apparent brutality of it. I choose to view it as honesty rather than brutality. Too many reviewers white wash the weaknesses of TI software they critically review. I will not. I think sometimes that we are afraid that the software market will dry up and blow away unless we give favorable reports on the software products that do appear for our computer. I prefer to think of it in another way; if we promote junk software in a favorable light, those that do publish product reviews will lose credibility and those that buy software based upon those reviews will simply be that much more reluctant to get burned a second time.

In the process of searching for the perfect data base manager I have purchased several programs and spent over $300. All of the programs that I own have positive points and all have negative points. What I

have discovered to date is that the "perfect" data base manager does not exist yet (not even in the business world). What I am going to share with you are my impressions of the programs I own and in doing so will perhaps save you a little time and money if you too are looking for that "perfect" application.

The programs I own are;

ACORN 99 from Oak Tree Systems
DBMS from Navarone Industries
DATA BASE 1 from SPC Software
DATA BASE 99 from Quality 99 Software
DATA BASE 300 from the International Users Group
DATA BASE X from Western Ware
PR BASE v1.2 and V2.0 from William Warren
TURBO DATAMAN from Easy Ware

I have used these programs enough to feel comfortable with each and could probably write several pages about each one. Unfortunately, publication space is limited and such a voluminous article would never see print because of it. Thus I have tried to be brief, but to the point, in my comments on each program. Also, please keep in mind that my comments are subjective, based upon how each product meets MY needs and expectations. Yours may be different.

For ease of reference I have included some of the information in a comparison table that allow analysis at a glance. In the paragraphs that follow I will try to provide a little detail to each issue and cover special features, lack of what I view as standard features and product performance of each program. I apologize in advance for the cryptic style you will read, however, I needed to be brief. The DATA BASE 300 program will not be looked at since it is not available.

>ACORN 99=:

Among the top three DBM's available to the TI community. The only relational data base available, also the only one with a programming language interface for custom applications. EXTREMELY powerful and well designed. Can support three active files at one time, allows existing data file formats to be edited, copied to another file, resequenced and can reformat a file structure into another file format. Does not have the ability to show number of records in a file. Can hold more than 1500 records per file on a SS/SD disk (depending on file size). Sorts alpha characters and strings better than numbers. Indexes record location for subfile creation and mainfile is then concatenated to create the subfile as another database. Possesses ability to search using; "equal to, unequal, greater than, less than, ignore" logical operators. Supports relational operators in search routines through the use of a true/false convention that allows selection of records where all parameters are met or any parameters are met. CAN print a single record from a display screen. EXTREMELY slow in operation. Uses 40 column text mode. Allows duplicate key field data entries. Allows printer control codes to be encripted in setup file. Provides input checking for "numeric, integer, money, string, flag and date" entries. Overall, a fabulous program, with almost limitless potential. The best documentation of the group, giving many

examples along with explanations. SUPERB application.

>DBMS=(Navarone):

Allows 32,000 records per file but only 350 per SS/SD diskette. Limits you to half that amount if you wish to sort the file since it creates a second sorted file that demands equal space on your data disk. Most interesting report generator I have ever seen, a cut and paste type affair that is really neat but poorly documented. Excellent custom screen design module which includes help screens that you design. FAST,FAST,FAST. Requires unique key field entries only, which I find inconvenient. Documentation is better than originally written but still confusing at times and incomplete. Dotes on mundane things and skips over or entirely omits important things. Does totaling in reports but no other computational work. Does not support single record printing but can use the report module to scroll data on screen, write it to disk or send it to your printer. Can append new data fields to the end of an existing record but cannot reformat the record in any other way. Can create subfiles but you have to figure out how to do it for yourself because the documentation does not tell you how. It doesn't even mention subfiles. Allows printer control codes to be encrypted in Report Generation file. Does not perform input checking of any type. All data is considered to be a string entry. Best suited for a hard disk environment. Not difficult to use once you have "played" with it, but can be intimidating at first.

>DATA BASE 1=:

Best suited for mailing lists or other LIST type data files. Cumbersome design setup requiring records to be accessed by their relative position in the file (record number). You must first list the records by a specified field if you don't know the record number. Time consuming. Provides three pre-set mailing label report formats and one custom format for your own design. Will NOT do reports that have heading information. Includes several nice utilities such as a formletter generator, disk file data base which creates a DB1 data base file out of the information on your library of disks. Does not provide for input checking nor length of field entries. Only looks at the length of overall record. Does searches by "equal to" operator only, only on one data field at a time. Requires that you first create an index file and then search. To search by another field you must create another index file. Searches by a maximum of 5 characters in any field. Sorts are limited to 1000 records no matter how many exist in the file, but both alpha and numeric sorts are offered. Subfiles can be created to a printer in the main program or to disk by using the Utilities options. Selection is by "equal to" or "between two values" which can be either alpha or numeric type.

>DATA BASE 99=:

More emphasis put on copy protection than on program performance. Allows custom screen design and claims 28 fields of up to 28 characters each. Would be a neat trick to do since four of the 24 rows on screen are used by program prompts. Fast assembly language interface for report generation. Cannot generate reports with headings and does not permit printer control codes to be inserted in report data. Does not save a format after design so you will have to re-create it each time you want a report. Data is printed in continuous format without regard

to page breaks or anything else. Design of layout is cumbersome, requiring you to conceptualize how many colons and/or semi-colons are needed to push the data across the page. Number of colons/semi-colons is limited to 127 characters allowed in a LINPUT command. A terrible system. Disk catalog accessed from main menu will crash program if you enter an alpha character instead of a number when it prompts for the disk drive number to be cataloged. Color is lost after a crash since it was CALLed from the LOAD program. Does not permit single record screen print (unless you buy the DB 99 Utilities), must use EDIT option to search for a record or search sequentially. Cannot go directly to a record by its relative position in the file. Will create subfiles to disk allowing the search by "less than, equal to or greater than" operators. Search is limited to one field for all practical purposes. Sorts can be performed in ascending order, by any one field. Sort is an actual re-write of the file. All data is considered string information. No number crunching (again, unless you buy the DB99 Utilities), no input checking. Documentation consists of two 8 1/2" X 11" sheets of paper printed on both sides. Program is slow, inflexible, inconvenient in many ways and cumbersome to use. It might have been an advanced application two years ago. Today it is a dinosaur, even with the DB99 Utilities. Much too expensive.

>DATA BASE X=:

Very modular, meaning that each function (adding, editing, printing, deleting etc.) is a separate program that must be loaded each time you want to use that function. Does statistical analysis of data. Record counter is inaccurate, code of program is jumbled and entirely unstructured. Does not sort data even though documentation uses the term "sort". What it means is "select". When DATA BASE X " sorts" by a particular parameter it is really selecting records for dumping to a printer that meet that parameter. Does allow selection between ranges. Cannot create subfiles, does not index existing records. Access of a record is done sequentially unless you know the record number. No way to tell the record number, you must guess. Supports 1 or 2 disk drives. Excrutiatingly slow. Requires that you name the data disk DBXDATA for no good reason that I can see, otherwise program errors out. Does not save report definition but does allow it to be printed in normal or compressed mode. Definition process is fairly simple but time consuming. Documentation is the "shabbiest" I have ever seen. It is photocopied and put into booklet form with the pages not even cut straight, so that some information is missing off of some pages. Overall, this program is JUNK! As with the IUG's DATA BASE 300/500, it never really belonged on the market in the state that it is in. Unfortunately, I didn't know that and paid out over $30 to find out.

>PR BASE=:

Totally assembly language coded. THE BEST all-around application in my opinion. FAST, flexible, does virtually anything a user would want in the way of data handling except number crunching. It will not do anything in that area. Treats all data as part of a big string just as DBMS and DATA BASE 99 do. As long as you own the PRB Utilities written by John Johnson you can create subfiles, other wise you can't. Has on-line help for commands, creates an index by any input field you choose and then accesses any record in about 1 second. Also has a FIND feature to look at data sequentially in any single field and a GLOBAL option that searches for a single data entry anywhere in the record.

Saves up to five report formats, V2.0 allows you to format a data disk. Custom screen layout with terrific graphics options for borders/windows etc. is available. A tremendous program, well thought out, well designed, artistically executed. FAIRWARE!!! PRB Utilities are free for the asking as long as you provide the disk and mailer. Report design routine is cumbersome and confusing. Prints single record from screen display in either 40 or 80 column mode. Program is very sensitive about I/O device names. My copies (V1.2 and V2.0) both require PIO. to work rather than just PIO or PIO/1 etc. With number crunching abilities this program would be a perfect "flat-file data manager" for most TI users. As it is, the value and performance for a FAIRWARE application or a commercial application too for that matter, is unsurpassed. If you don't have PR BASE then you are missing out on one of the premier productivity tools available to the TI Community.

>TURBO DATAMAN=:

This is the second most powerful and useful data manager, taking a back seat only to PR BASE. It runs slightly ahead of ACORN because it performs number crunching and is faster in operation. Like ACORN, TURBO DATAMAN allows you to create a dictionary of data items (fields) and then lets you choose from that library of fields to put a record together. Up to 30 fields are allowed per record. Twenty pre-defined records (file formats) can exist on one disk. Allows custom screen layout design, complete with graphics for borders/windows etc. Does input checking, allows secondary screen access like ACORN's Detail Records. Allows formulas to be created and saved that perform the four basic math functions. Report definitions can be saved. Allows wildcard type operators in searches, will print single record from screen display. Provides "less than, greater than, equal to, not equal to, greater than or equal to, less than or equal to" operators in screen display and report generation modules. Permits sub-totals in reports that can be fomatted like TI Extended Basic does with the IMAGE statement. Subfiles can be created through the report generator by sending the output selected to a disk file rather than a printer. The results must be converted back to INTERNAL, FIXED from DISPLAY FIXED before you can use it in the program however. TURBO DATAMAN does not provide you with that utility. The documentation instructs you to "write a program" to do it. Names used for different modules in the program are confusing. Ex; ETCH,SKETCH, SKETCHR, FETCH. Should change names to more accurately reflect function of module. Documentation acceptable but lacks adequate coverage in some areas. Utilities are provided to perform some mundane operations such as counting the amount of records in a database. Reformating or restructuring of an existing file is not permitted unless the input field is appended to the end of a record format. This program needs some "fine tuning" in some areas but is still an exciting productivity tool with immense possibilities. Its speed of operation is not fast but acceptable. It is faster than ACORN. One can set up the SKETCH program to auto-load if desired but the whole application should be centered around a menu in my opinion. As it is now, you must RUN each module from the READY> prompt when you need to use it, because every module exits with an END statement. If you don't own this program, you should. Whether you want to manage a mailing list or do accounting, TURBO DATAMAN is for you.

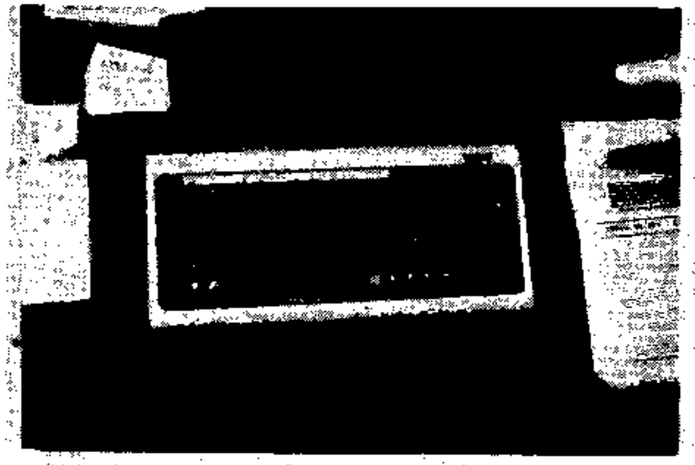
FEATURE TABLE:

FEATURE	ACORN99	DBMS	DB1	DB99	DB*X	PRBASE	TURBO DM
RECORDS/FILE	LIMITED BY DISK	32,000	LIMITED BY DISK	350-1400	LIMITED BY DISK	350/710	LIMITED BY DISK
FIELDS/REC.	54	25	10	28	10	32	30
MAX.RECORD LENGTH	255	255	245	246	246	246	255
MAX.FIELD LENGTH	40	40	28	28	28	246	28
MEMORY REQ'D	32K	32K	32K	32K	16K	32K	32K
LANUGUAGE	XB/ASSM	ASSM	XB/ASSM	XB/ASSM	XBASIC	ASSM	XB/ASSM
CUSTOM DESIGN SCREEN LAYOUT	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
SCRN GRPHICS CAPABILITY	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
ALTERED CHAR SET USED	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
CUSTOM REPORT DEFINITION	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SAVES REPORT DEFINITION	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES

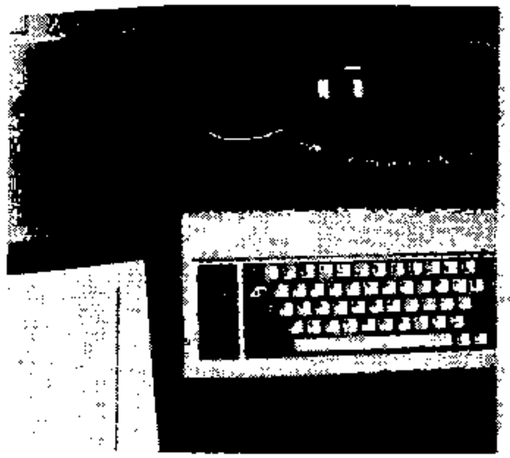
THANK YOU

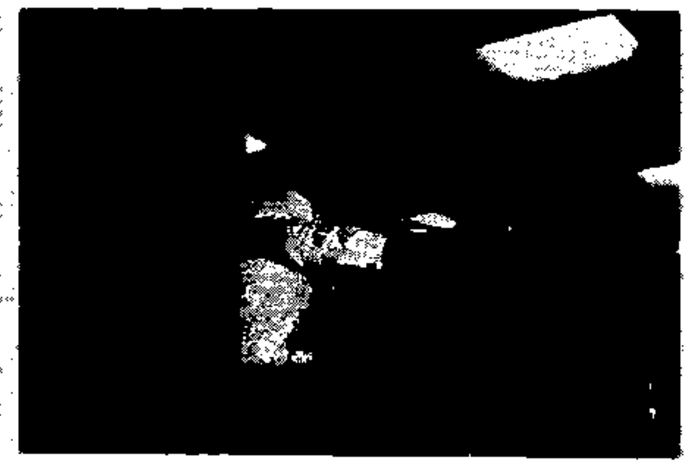
TO ALL THOSE GOOD PEOPLE WHO HELPED MAKE THIS YEAR'S FAIRE THE VERY BEST EVER!!!!!

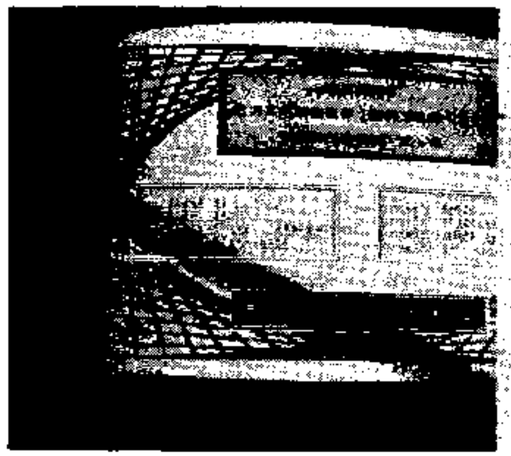
!!!THANKS SANDY!!!

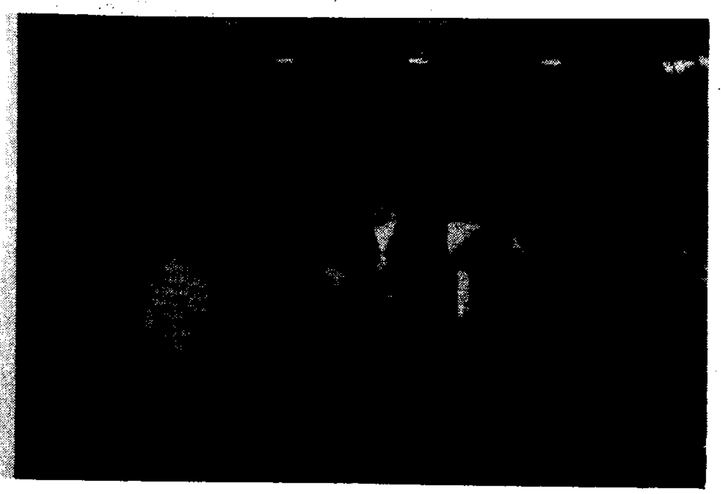


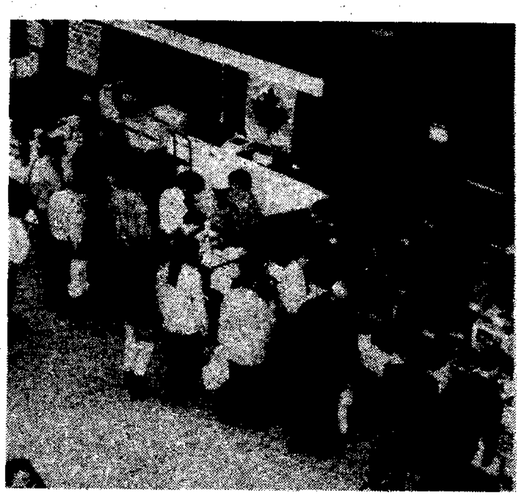
CHICAGO
USERS GROUP











GAME REVIEWS: Bill Gaskill

COMPUTER WAR and Others

I recall the day I opened up my new February 1984 issue of Compute! and saw that a review of a game called COMPUTER WAR was being reviewed and that the game was available for my TI-99/4A. I turned to page 134 with excitement and began to ingest all that the reveiwer had to say about the game. After reading it I had mixed emotions on the value and performance of the product but decided to buy it anyway, since little new software was coming out for the 99/4A and certainly nothing as current and timely as a game based upon a (then) recent hit movie. Unfortunately, I later found out that Thorn EMI, the British entertainment giant, denied that they had any plans to provide the game for the TI. My balloon burst and I shelved any thought of the product until about a month ago when I received the new TENEX Computer Express catalog. Much to my delight, I saw a picture of the COMPUTER WAR game screen and some text explaining that an outfit in England had bought the rights to COMPUTER WAR and had gone ahead and produced it and two other games for the 99/4A. I ordered a copy that day.

Although I had assumed the program was to have originally been produced as a module for the TI, the new offering is not. It comes on a disk, along with two other game programs, RIVER RESCUE and SUBMARINE COMMANDER. The package includes a thin book that documents play for all three games and the disk includes a loader for Extended Basic. The programs will also load from Mini Memory or Editor/Assembler. A 32K RAM expansion card is required since all are written entirely in assembly language.

COMPUTER WAR is a three-part, single player, single-difficulty level game. It opens with an impressive graphics display of a map of the Western Hemisphere and a grid that is used as part of level three's challenge.

Part one involves sighting in on any one of several little white dots (that represent radar impressions of incoming missiles) on the map screen that enter the picture from the screen edges. A joystick is required and you must zero in quickly and then push the fire button. I found that this was virtually impossible to do when using the TI joysticks and still difficult when using the ProStick II. If you only have the TI ones, I would buy or borrow one of the third-party joysticks because you will be frustrated in your attempts to make the crosshairs line up with the moving dots on the radar screen.

After zeroing in on an incoming missile and pressing the fire button the screen changes to give you a view of the topography and sky from inside a jet fighter. Your goal is to chase down the missile and get it in your sights to shoot it down before it strikes one of your cities. GOOD LUCK! Even with the ProStick I was a complete failure as a fighter pilot. Assuming that you have accurately sighted in on the missile (the screen tells you that no missiles are in range if you missed it on the map) you must still FIND it on your screen as a fighter pilot. Then, IF you find it, you must align your jet's crosshairs on it and shoot it. The missile DOES NOT cooperate at all, moving side-to-side and up and down (as in the chase scene in FIREFOX

) to evade your attempts. To compound the problem, your time in the attempt is limited to only a few seconds.

If you are lucky enough or just plain skilled enough to succeed, then you save your city and go back to the map screen and another missile. If not, or if you shoot all the missiles down, you move to the last part of the game which is the code cracking grid that is displayed on the left half of the screen that shows the Western Hemisphere map. Here, you see two banks of flashing squares, a smaller one on the bottom of the screen and a larger on above it. The bottom grid contains a pattern that must be matched in the larger grid at the top of the screen. To do so you move an overlay about the grid with the flashing squares in an attempt to match the pattern of the smaller grid with one in the upper grid. If you do so, you must press the fire button. This awards you bonus points for cracking the code. Here again, GOOD LUCK! As I said earlier, after reading the Compute! review I had mixed emotions about the COMPUTER WAR game. After playing it I still have mixed emotions. COMPUTER WAR's pace of play is so fast that it can be intimidating. I had almost no luck in zeroing in on the missiles and almost always got an "out of range" message from the game when I tried to find the missiles to shoot them down. Of course my 9 year old son didn't seem to have so much difficulty. I wonder why? I found the graphics to be excellent with the exception of the terrain that is shown when the player is in the "fighter-pilot" phase of the game. Sounds are limited but are not really an important part of play. The theme of COMPUTER WAR is interesting and challenging, adhering fairly well to the movie. Overall, I am pleased with my purchase, even though I am not very good at defending my cities.

RIVER RESCUE is a one or two player game. It involves steering a boat down a river in an effort to dock at the north bank of the river to pick up passengers escaping from peril on shore. On your trip downstream you must navigate around crocodiles, electric eels and other hazards to avoid being sunk. I had the most success with this game, but that does not mean that it is not challenging. Quite the contrary. It is simply more of a shoot-'em-up type game that I am more used to and consequently felt more at home with. The graphics are excellent, the game fast-paced and the theme interesting enough to keep a player coming back for more.

SUBMARINE COMMANDER is both complex and challenging but not nearly as fast-paced as COMPUTER WAR. It does require thought, tactics and a multitude of keypresses and joystick movements to accomplish the desired manuevers. Graphics are excellent again and sound is adequate for game play. You will have to read and re-read the documentation on this one though, because it is not easy to command a submarine in war time.

The goal of the game is to sink enemy shipping. While trying to do so, you can be attacked yourself by depth charges while under water or other weapons if you are on the surface. If you are not adept enough at evading the enemy you can be literally pummeled and shook to pieces while trying to get away. The sound and screen vibrations can be unnerving to an inexperienced submariner.

Documentation for game play on all three games is cryptic but adequate. Of the three games on the disk, RIVER RESCUE has the best documentation and the game was the easiest to play. SUBMARINE COMMANDER has the most

complex documentation because of its complex theme. The game package even provides a keyboard template (overlay) for the SUBMARINE COMMANDER game because of all the options required to play it.

Graphics on all three games are among the best and most detailed that I have ever seen. The programmer(s) who worked on these games were skilled professionals to say the least. The challenge of each game is enough to keep the best joystick jockey enthralled for weeks. All-in-all, I would recommend a look at this disk. For $29.95 it offers a lot of challenge to the serious arcade game player and certainly offers a new look at what is possible on a TI-99/4A.

REVIEW:

Performance.....A
Ease of Use.....B
Documentation.....C
Value.....A+
Final Grade.....A

Cost: $29.95 plus S/H

Supplier: Tenex Computer Express
Box 6578
South Bend Ind. 46660

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Software Review: John Behnke

Title: BASIC COMPILER
Requires: 32k, Disk Drive, X-Basic
Price: $20.00 (plus $2 shipping)
Author: Peter Kull
Distributor: Ryte Data
210 Mountain Street
Haliburton Ontario K0M 1S0
Canada

Ease Of Use ..... B+
Documentation C
Performance ..... B
Overall ..... B

Comments: Well worth the money if you program or like to modify programs.

While browsing around at the TI Faire I came across the Ryte Data boothe. Out of all their products one caught my eye - BASIC Compiler. This package which came with a manual and a disk claimed to be a true Basic compiler. For those of you who don't know what a compiler is, read the next paragraph and if you do, skip over it and continue with this article.

Basically a compiler does this. When you write a program in Basic, it has to be translated into a language that a computer chip can readily understand. The Basic language is an interpreted language. This means that an interpretor program (located inside the computer and on chips inside the X-Basic module) looks at each line of your program and translates it into machine code which the computer can understand. The result is that a Basic program is much slower because each line of your program must go through translation everytime the program is run. What a compiler does is to translate the entire program all at once and save it to disk so it will never have to be translated again and will run much faster.

Peter Kull has written a very nice compiler that is the best I have seen for the TI. You do not have to re-write your program (unless you are lazy like me and forget to put an END statement at the end of a program) and the program is very easy to use. The documentation is very sparse and should be enhanced a little. I think it would be best if I described its limitations because that is what you want to know.

- Several of my sloppier programs would not work. I don't blame the program as much as I due my sloppy programming habbits.

- Programs to be compiled are limited in size because the final compiled program size must be about 50 sectors. (program must be able to be saved as program image)

- Compiled version is about twice the size as the original program effectivly reducing the original program to about 30 sectors or less depending on the complexity of the original program. Note: programs may be chained together I.E. one program may run another.

- Only one file may be opened in your program.
  (I hope this will be corrected as I would like to compiler programs that access more than one file such as smash)

Don't let these small flaws prevent you from purchasing this fine product. If you knew the complexity of what a Basic Compiler must due to work, you would realize the complexity of this program. While this program still is not a true compiler, it comes very close. The last thing I will mention is that the program must be loaded using a special load program. Two load programs come in the package, one for Floating Point and one for Integer. Using the integer loader results in the program running much faster but it can only be used if your program uses numbers between -32767 and 32768 - no decimals (3.7) are allowed. If you need this capability, you must use the floating point loader which is slower but still results in your program running 3 times normal speed.

Here is an example program and the speed increase you can expect to receive using the compiler:

```
100 REM BASIC DEMO PROGRAM
110 CALL CLEAR
120 A$="THIS IS A TEST"
130 RANDOMIZE
140 FOR I=1 TO 50
150 ROW=INT(RND)+1
160 COL=INT(RND)+1
170 FOR J=0 TO LEN(A$)-1
180 CALL HCHAR(ROW,COL+J,ASC
(SEG$(A$,J+1,1)))
190 NEXT J
200 FOR J=0 TO LEN(A$)-1
210 CALL HCHAR(ROW,COL+J,32)
220 NEXT J
230 NEXT I
240 END
```

Console Basic	118 Sec.
Extended Basic	68 Sec.
Compiled Float	24 Sec.
Compiled Integer	10 Sec.

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Software Review
by Paul Farber (251)
"PRE-SCAN IT, BY PETER HODDIE"

Have you ever written (or just run) a piece of software written in Extended Basic and have had enough time to go out, get married, and raise a family between the time you typed in RUN<ENTER> and something actually started to happen. This is due to the computer scanning the entire program and allocating space in its memory for all of the commands (i.e. CALL COLOR, DEF, CALL CHAR, etc.), constants, and variables that are contained within the program. In the case of a program that may be 50-60 sectors long this delay time could be 20 to 40 seconds depending upon how the program is written.

Buried within the capabilities of Extended Basic is a little used function called prescanning. This allows you to carefully write a program with all of the commands, variables, and so forth placed neatly at the top, and a prescan comand that tells the TI "Don't bother to look at the rest of the prgram, all the good stuff is up here!" Unfortunetly, many of us (myself included) never bother to use this capability because its just too much trouble to write software in a logical concise manner. After all, a program is like a living being, it grows by stages not all of them planned. Well, finally someone has come up with a handy utility program to use this prescan function and make your programs run faster. Those of you who attended the Faire remember Peter Hoddie, who proved that computer folks will listen to someone playing the cello, if the other two partners of the trio are TI-99's. Peter has written a program package called "Pre-Scan IT!" that is marketed through Asgard Software which is really a pleasure to use. (Peter is also the author of "Font Writer" which is being reviewed by Jack Topham)

To use Pre-Scan It (PSI) requires that you first save off the program to be scanned in the merge format (D/V 163) by the command: Save Dskx.filename,merge Instructions are given in the documentation for this program which will enable you to remove FOR SCANNING PURPOSES ONLY! the protection on an XB program that is saved with the "Protection" option. Next the PSI disk is run (Autoboot under XB load or RUN "DSK1.LOAD" otherwise. The first menu that comes up gives you three versions of the PSI program to choose from;Generic, with 16K memory, and with the 32K memory expansion. After you have choosen the option that best fits your equipment configuration the main screen appears. On the main screen you will be prompted to enter the name of the input (Merge) file and a name for the output file the program will produce. The next input is a handy little option that bears mention and that is what the auther calls "External." Just hitting the <ENTER> defaults to the standard TI Extended Basic command set, you have the capability to also select, Myarc, Mechatronic's, and Millers Graphics Extended Basic modifications. In addition, although the documentation says that files will be distributed for other versions as necessary, the existing files can be modified by TI-Writer to include any addtional CALLs found in other versions of XB.

If these inputs are OK by you (the program asks) then you have the

further option of replacing up to 5 numbers in the program with characters (saves space), replacing REMs with ! (saves more space), scanning subprograms, and producing a complete merge file. This last option can save you a lot of time running this program since all you would have to merge back in are the prescan lines that the program creates. Unfortunetely, if you elect to have numbers replaced with variables, or REMs replaced with ! then a complete merge file will be necessary. The only complaint that I have (being a nit-picker) is the speed that the program runs at when all options are taken. I tested it out on a data base program written in XB that contains about 550 lines of code and the run time was slightly over 30 minutes for it to scan all of the lines, complile the commands, replace the variables, and so on. Of course, when I was finished I now have a program that is up and running in 5 seconds instead of 30. On the whole, I would recommend PSI as well worth the investment for anyone who does extensive programming in Extended Basic or has some XB programs that they want to get up and go a bit faster.

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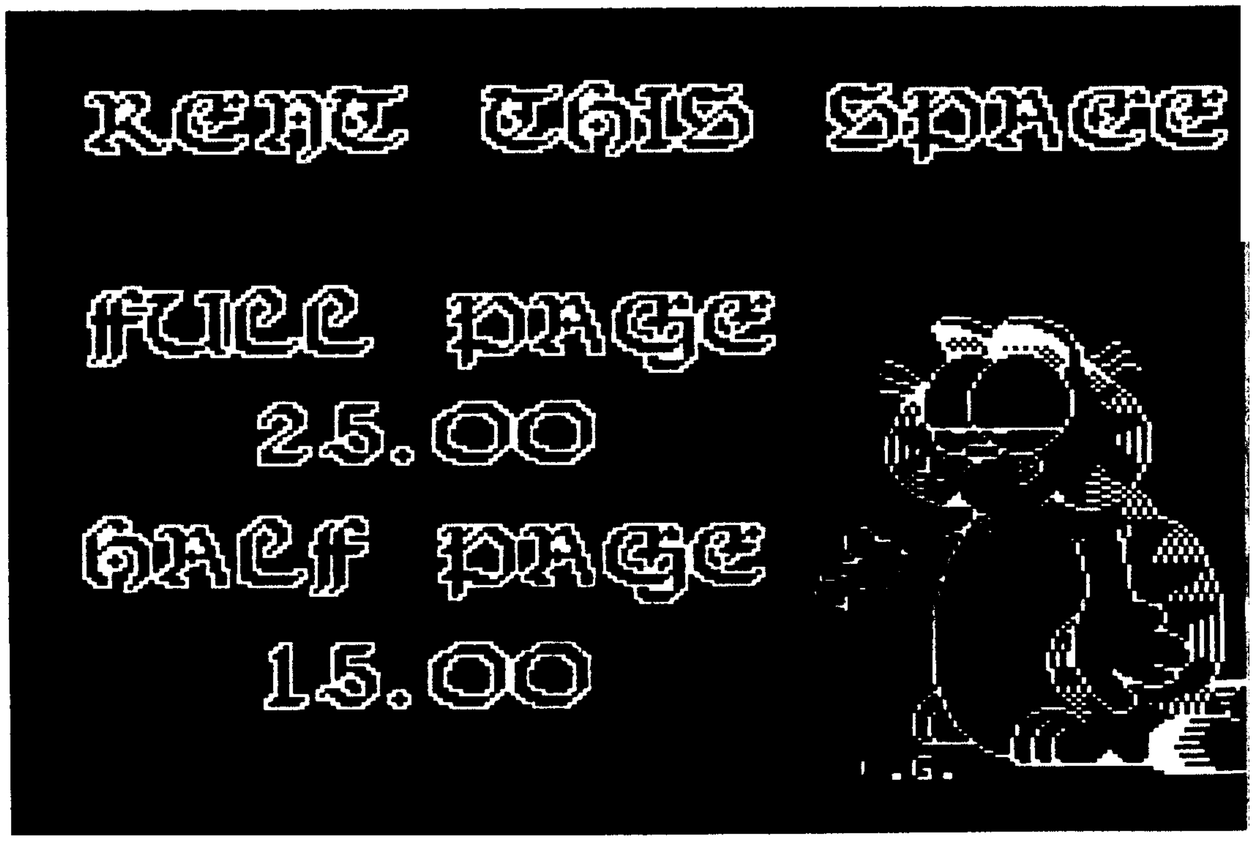

REVIEW LIST

The following list was compiled by Bill Gaskill. Unfortunately it does not include the reviews published in issues of this newsletter. But, if you are interested in learning more about the various hardware and software available this list will guide you as to where to find the reviews.

TI-99/4A PRODUCT REVIEWS - compiled by Wm. Gaskill 72267,253

PRODUCT NAME	TYPE	PUBLICATION	DATE	PAGE
4A/FLYER	Entertainment	Micropendium	May/86	37
4A/TALK	Terminal Emulator	Micropendium	Oct/85	42
9900 BASIC	Programming	Micropendium	Nov/85	43
9900 DISK CONTROLLER CARD	Hardware	Micropendium	Nov/84	25
9900 MICRO EXPANSION SYSTEM	Hardware	Micropendium	Apr/85	27
99/4A AUTO SPELLING CHECKER	Word Proc. Utility	Micropendium	Sep/84	23
		Home Computer	V4/N5	38
ACCOUNTS REC./ACCTS. PAYABLE	Accounting	Micropendium	Jun/84	13
ACORN 99	Data Base Manager	Micropendium	Jul/85	34
ADVANCED DIAGNOSTICS	Disk Utility	Micropendium	Jul/85	39
ADVENTURE EDITOR	Utility	Micropendium	Nov/85	44
ANCHOR MARK XII MODEM	Telecommunications	Micropendium	Sep/84	22
ALIEN ADDITION	Education	Home Computer	V5/N4	51
ALPHA-PAK	Education	Home Computer	V4/N3	114
ALPINER	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Apr/83	21
ARTIST'S COMPANION	Art/Graphics Util.	Micropendium	May/86	41
ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE	Book-Davis Pub.	Micropendium	Jul/84	15
ASW TACTICS II	Entertainment	Micropendium	Jun/84	18
ATLANTIC CITY GAMES	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Apr/83	22
AXIOM GP-100 TI II PRINTER	Hardware	Home Computer	V4/N4	44
B-1 NUCLEAR BOMBER	Entertainment	Micropendium	Feb/84	14
BANKROLL	Entertainment	Micropendium	Aug/85	40
BA-WRITER	Word Processor	Micropendium	Feb/86	38
BEANSTALK ADVENTURE	Entertainment	Micropendium	Feb/84	17
BEGINNING ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE	Book-DD Pub.	Micropendium	Feb/85	24
BITMAC	Art/Graphics Util.	Micropendium	Jan/86	37
BLACKBEARD'S TREASURE	Entertainment	99Home Computer	May/83	21
BMC COLOR MONITOR	Hardware	Micropendium	Mar/85	31
BOUNCER	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Apr/83	22
BUCK ROGERS	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N4	31
BUDGET MASTER	Productivity	Micropendium	Apr/84	14
BURGERTIME	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N3	107
BUSINESS GRAPHS 99	Productivity	Micropendium	Mar/86	37
CAVERN QUEST	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Aug/83	29
CDC 9409 DISK DRIVE	Hardware	Micropendium	Jun/84	15
CHALLENGE POKER	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Jun/83	23
CHARACTER SET/GRAPHICS DES.	Productivity	Micropendium	May/85	30
COMPANION	Word Processor	Compute!	Sep/85	63
		Home Computer	V4/N3	145
		Micropendium	May/84	13
COMPUADD DUAL DISK DRIVES	Hardware	Home Computer	V4/N4	40
COMPUTER WAR	Entertainment	Compute!	Feb/84	134
CONSOLE WRITER 2.1	Word Processor	Micropendium	Oct/85	47
COUNT-SIL	Spreadsheet	Home Computer	V4/N3	62
CRIME AND PUNISHMENT	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Sep/83	24
CROSS-COUNTRY CAR RALLY	Entertainment	99er Magazine	V1/N6	36
DATA BASE 1	Data Base Manager	Micropendium	Jun/85	39
DATA BASE 300/500	Data Base Manager	Micropendium	Feb/84	20
DATA BASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	Data Base Manager	Micropendium	Dec/84	29
DATA BASE X	Data Base Manager	Micropendium	Nov/84	34
DEATH DRONES	Entertainment	99er Magazine	Jan/83	28
DEFENDER	Entertainment	Micropendium	Oct/84	25
DEFEND THE CITIES	Entertainment	99er Magazine	Nov/82	43
DISK + AID	Utility	Micropendium	Apr/85	29
DISPLAY ENHANCEMENT PACKAGE	Utility	Home Computer	V5/N4	49
		Micropendium	Dec/85	43
DONKEY KONG	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N2	74
		Micropendium	Apr/84	19
DOW FLIGHT SIMULATOR	Entertainment	99er Magazine	Jan/83	11
		Micropendium	Aug/85	37
DRAW PLOT	Productivity	Micropendium	May/85	31
ESCAPE FROM BALTHAZAR	Entertainment	Micropendium	Mar/84	15
EXTENDED BASIC II+	Programming	Micropendium	Oct/85	44
FACEMAKER	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N1	178
FILE DIRECTORY	Utility	Home Computer	V5/N6	33
FLOPPY COPY	Utility	Micropendium	Nov/84	33

FLY SNUFFER	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N1	76
FROGGY	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Feb/83	35
FOUNDATION 128K CARD	Hardware	Micropendium	Jan/85	29
FOUNDATION Z80A CARD	Hardware	Micropendium	Nov/85	40
FUTURA GENERAL LEDGER	Productivity	99er Magazine	V1/N3	14
FUTURA MAILING LIST	Productivity	99er Magazine	Dec/82	11
GALACTIC BATTLE	Entertainment	Micropendium	Aug/84	17
GALAXY	Entertainment	Micropendium	Aug/84	18
GARKON'S GETAWAY	Entertainment	Micropendium	Mar/84	16
GEMINI 10X/15X PRINTERS	Hardware	Micropendium	Apr/85	31
GRAM KRACKER (over-view)	Hardware	Micropendium	Sep/85	12
GRAM KRACKER (review)	Hardware	Micropendium	May/86	39
GRAPHICS CODE GENERATOR	Programming Aid	Home Computer	V4/N2	129
GRAPHX COMPANION	Art/Graphics Util.	Micropendium	Sep/85	39
GRAPHICS DESIGNER	Programming Aid	Home Computer	V4/N2	129
GRAPHX	Art/Graphics	Home Computer	V5/N5	30
		Micropendium	Jun/85	36
GRAVITY MASTER	Entertainment	Micropendium	Dec/84	32
HANGMAN	Education	99Home Computer	Oct/83	76
HENHOUSE	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Mar/83	41
		Compute!	Sep/83	181
HENPECKED	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N1	57
HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE	Entertainment	Compute!	Jun/85	65
		Home Computer	V5/N5	40
HOME BUDGET	Productivity	Micropendium	Apr/84	15
HOPPER	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N1	58
HP THINKJET PRINTER	Hardware	Home Computer	V5/N1	52
JAIL BREAK	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Nov/83	27
KANTRONICS RADIO INTERFACE	Hardware	Home Computer	V5/N1	43
KILLER CATERPILLAR	Entertainment	Micropendium	Oct/84	22
KING OF THE CASTLE	Entertainment	Home Computer	V5/N1	54
KHE SAHN	Entertainment	Micropendium	Apr/84	18
LEARNING ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE	Book-Wordware Pub.	Micropendium	Dec/84	33
LOST TREASURE OF THE AZTECS	Entertainment	Micropendium	Jun/84	17
MAD-DOG	Entertainment	Micropendium	May/84	17
MAIL-CALL	Productivity	Micropendium	Mar/84	18
MATHEMATICS ACTION GAMES	Education	Compute!	Mar/83	108
MEAN STREETS	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Jul/83	24
MICROSURGEON	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N3	129
		Micropendium	Feb/84	18
MIDNITE MASON	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N5	53
		Micropendium	Sep/85	36
MINER 2049'er	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N2	57
MINI-GOLF	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Jun/83	21
MINI MEMORY MODULE	Programming	99er Magazine	V1/N5	13
MONTHLY BUDGET$ MASTER	Productivity	Micropendium	Apr/84	13
MOON PATROL	Entertainment	Home Computer	V5/N3	82
MORNING STAR CP/M CARD	Hardware	Home Computer	V5/N2	44
		Micropendium	Mar/85	24
MYARC 32K/128K RAM CARD	Hardware	Micropendium	Sep/85	37
MYARC HARD DISK	Hardware	Micropendium	Mar/85	28
NIGHT MISSION	Entertainment	Micropendium	Feb/86	36
NIT-WIT	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Sep/83	23
NOTE WHIZ PITCH MASTER	Education/Music	99er Magazine	Jan/83	17
ON GAMING	Programming Aid	Micropendium	Feb/84	19
PALOMAR HAM RADIO INTERFACE	Hardware	Home Computer	V5/N1	43
PARSEC	Entertainment	99er Magazine	Dec/82	43
PC KEYS	Utility	Micropendium	Aug/85	39
PERIPHERAL DIAGNOSTICS	Utility	Micropendium	Feb/86	37
PHAROAH'S TOMB	Entertainment	99er Magazine	Nov/82	28
POLE POSITION	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N4	29
		Micropendium	Jul/84	18
PR BASE	Data Base Manager	Micropendium	Apr/86	39
PROGRAMS FOR THE TI	Book-Davis Pub.	Micropendium	May/84	18
PTERM-99	Terminal Emulator	Micropendium	Jan/85	30
PULSAR	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Jul/83	23
PYRAMID OF DOOM	Entertainment	99er Magazine	V1/N5	50
Q*BERT	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N2	75
		Micropendium	May/84	16
QUICK-COPYER	Utility	Micropendium	Sep/84	24
RABBIT TRAIL	Entertainment	Compute!	Sep/83	181
RING DESTROYER	Entertainment	99er Magazine	Nov/82	29
RINGWRAITH'S LAIR	Entertainment	99er Magazine	Dec/82	43
ROBOT RUNNER	Entertainment	Compute!	Jan/84	146
SHUTTLE COMMAND	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Mar/83	41
SKY DIVER	Entertainment	Micropendium	Mar/84	17
SMITH-CORONA TP-1 PRINTER	Hardware	99er Magazine	Nov/82	11
SPACE STATION 1	Entertainment	99er Magazine	V1/N5	50
		Compute!	Aug/83	132

SPEED READING	Education	Home Computer	V5/N6	41
SPINAFORTUNE	Entertainment	99Home Computer	May/83	22
SST BASIC COMPILER	Programming	Home Computer	V4/N4	36
STARCROSS	Entertainment	Micropendium	Jan/86	38
STARPROBE 99	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Aug/83	30
STARSHIP CONCORD	Entertainment	Micropendium	Jun/84	16
STAR TREK	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N4	31
		Micropendium	Mar/84	14
STATISTICS MODULE	Productivity	Compute!	Dec/83	196
SUPER BUGGER	Utility	Micropendium	Nov/84	31
SUPER CATALOGER	Productivity	99Home Computer	Mar/83	20
SUPER DUPER	Utility	Micropendium	Mar/86	35
SUPER EXTENDED BASIC	Programming	Micropendium	Feb/85	20
SUPER SKETCH	Hardware	Home Computer	V4/N5	42
		Micropendium	Jan/85	27
TANDON TM-100-2 DISK DRIVE	Hardware	Micropendium	Feb/84	15
TAG TOM AND FIRE	Education/Ent.	Home Computer	V4/N2	74
TERMINAL EMULATOR-1200	Terminal Emulator	Micropendium	Aug/84	15
THE CHICKEN	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Feb/83	35
THE GAME OF WIT	Entertainment	Micropendium	Jul/84	17
THE MISSING LINK	Hardware	Home Computer	V5/N3	36
THEON RAIDERS	Entertainment	Micropendium	Jul/84	15
THE PROJECT BOSS	Productivity	99er Magazine	V1/N3	15
THIEF	Entertainment	99er Magazine	Jan/83	29
		Micropendium	Apr/84	17
TI-ARTIST	Art/Graphics	Micropendium	Aug/85	38
TI-MAZE	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N2	76
TI-RUNNER	Entertainment	Micropendium	Jan/85	31
TI TOAD	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Apr/83	23
TM990/602 UNIVERSITY BOARD	Hardware	99er Magazine	Nov/82	59
T.O.D. EDITOR	Entertainment	Micropendium	Mar/86	36
TOUCH TYPING TUTOR	Education	Home Computer	V5/N3	48
TOWER-AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER	Entertainment	Micropendium	Aug/84	16
TRANSTAR 120S PRINTER	Hardware	Micropendium	Nov/84	24
TRIPLE TECH CARD	Hardware	Micropendium	Dec/85	44
TUNNELS OF DOOM	Entertainment	99er Magazine	Nov/82	28
TYPWRITER	Word Processor	99Home Computer	Aug/83	22
U.S. OPEN TENNIS	Entertainment	Micropendium	Apr/86	38
VIDEO VEGAS	Entertainment	Compute!	Sep/83	181
VOID	Entertainment	Micropendium	Feb/84	16
WIZARD'S DOMINION	Entertainment	Micropendium	Sep/84	25
WYCOVE FORTH	Programming	Micropendium	Sep/84	16
WYVERN	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Oct/83	30
XB DETECTIVE	Utility	Micropendium	Oct/85	46
ZOMBIE MAMBO	Entertainment	99Home Computer	Oct/83	28
ZORK I	Entertainment	Home Computer	V4/N2	73
		Micropendium	Oct/84	20
ZORK II	Entertainment	Micropendium	Feb/85	25

EXPANDING RAM MEMORY

HUGE EXPANSION MEMORIES By Ollie Hebert

TI (and others) made 32k expansion memories for our TI-99/4A's available years ago in both the stand alone (SA) and Peripheral Expansion Box (PEB) card configurations. Next came the huge 128k memory cards and then the 256k cards. Now there are even larger memories available.

CorComp makes a 512k in both SA (about $280) and PEB (about $240) styles. Myark has a 512k upgrade (about $110) to their 128k (about $200) PEB card. Newsflash: Mega Ram now has a 992k SA (about $580), and, when combined with your present 32k card, results in 1024k (1m) of memory! I have been told that two of the 512k cards can be combined but that is not a verified fact. Perhaps there are other large memories available now, but these are the ones that I am aware of.

This expansion memory (above the usual 32k) is not available in Extended BASIC, TI-Writer, or MS-Multiplan. It can be used (with appropriate software) in Editor/Assembler programs, as a print spooler, or as a disk drive emmulator. Little software is available at present, but CorComp has promised a word processor that can use their 512k expansion.

EASY 28 COLUMN LISTINGS: Ollie Hebert

In the command mode, (a program must be in memory) enter:

```
>OPEN #1:"PIO" :: PRINT #1: C
 HR$(27);"X";CHR$(11);CHR$(39
 ):: CLOSE #1
>LIST "PIO"
>OPEN #1:"PIO" :: PRINT #1: C
 HR$(27);"@" :: CLOSE #1
```

The above is for the standard parallel printer. If your printer parameters are different than these, substitute them in place of "PIO". The TI-99 insists on inserting a carriage return after 80 characters, so long statements will always have four spaces at the end of each third line of print.

The codes above are those for my printer. Yours may be different. <ESC> "X" CHR$(n) CHR$(m), Specifically, CHR$(27) "X" CHR$(11) CHR$(39), sets my margins to 11 and 39 (a difference of 28, the screen width). I like to list my programs in this manner so that I can pencil in notes that I refuse to include within the program as REMarks.

The last entry is mainly to remind you to reset the printer (<ESC> "@" on my printer). Alternately, most printers will do a reset if powered down. The new margins will remain in effect until they are reset. For the RS232 (printer) card, the CLOSE statement isn't really necessary. For other devices, you will anger the computer greatly if you don't close properly, and believe me, the computer doesn't forget it. Unclosed files may cause some loss of data, loss of data files, or even loss of a complete disk. Get into the habit of always closing every device.

WINNERS

Congratulations to winners of all drawings at the FAIRE. Winner of the monitor was D. Thomas.

Winners of the arcade game contests were as follows:

GAME	WINNER	SCORE
TI INVADERS	John Traver	13,448
PARSEC	Nathan Wooley	192,000
ALPINER	Harold Shanafield	29,319

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libtaty shelf

— Bob Demeter —

Well, once again the Chicago TI Users Group has proved to the world why we are #1. I have read numerous messages on various bulletin boards about our fourth annual faire. All were very positive and said the faire was a complete success. Matter of fact, some faires scheduled for early '87 are using Chicago as an example. The one to beat. There were some disappointed people though. The ones that missed the faire. Most all are looking forward to '87 and the 5th annual faire. I don't know how, but I'm sure next year's faire will be even better.

I'd like to congratulate Sandy Bartels for the tireless effort she put into this faire. Many, many hours and months of work went into planning and organizing this faire. The final product speaks for itself. CONGRATULATIONS!, Sandy and thanks for a GREAT Faire. Of course I have to extend my congratulations to the chairpersons of the various committees. And last but not least, congratulations and thankyou to all the members that volunteered their time and equiptment. Everyone showed the true spirit. They came together, gave unselfishly and acted as one. This is why our group and all we do is the BEST.

I'd like to personally thank everyone that helpped with the library. These people worked all day long. They copied disks when we ran out, answered questions and gave advise. The library was a huge sucess thanks to all of you. I'd like to thank: Chuck Levitt, Nick Iacovelli Jr., Mark Harms, Paul Dave Farber,

Ed Svizzero, and Mr. Dave Green who came all the way from New Jersey to help out. There may be a few others that I missed. I apologize for my ignorance and thank you for your assistance. As I stated earlier, it's members like you that pull together for a common cause that make our group what it is, #1.

I may be out of line here, but, I'd like to thank everyone that attended our faire. For without you, all our work would have been for naught. Everyone was great. The workers, the vendors, and the attendees. We all got together and showed the world something. Someone on CompuServe may have said it right. We are a cult. We got together for a common cause, our TI 99/4(A). Let the other computer owners stand back and take a look. This machine is by no means dead. TI did us a favor by pulling the plug. There is more software and hardware then ever out there. Who knows, this thing may never die. Some day, when my 3 year old presents me with a grandchild, I may have to buy another TI just for them.

OK Bob, get off your soap box before you break your nose. Hey, who was that guy wearing the "Lou Phillips for President" button? Before I step down from my soap box, I'd like to say it was a pleasure to meet all the people I talked to. Until the faire, most of you were either just

a voice on the phone or a message on a BBS. It truely was my pleasure and I look forward to chatting with you again some day. And yes Cynthia and Jane, I do look taller in chat.

OK, lets do some library stuff. What's new? What's going on? How about RLE? What is it? RLE stands for Run Length Encoded. Still a mystery? What it is is an encoded representation of a high resolution picture. The higher the resolution the better the picture quality. RLE seems to be a big thing going on now. Great pictures that can be displayed on your screen or dumped to your printer. I am adding an entire disk of RLE's to the library. The disk will contain the RLE program, the docs. and some pictures to get you started. As time goes on, we'll be getting more disks of pictures to add to the library.

As some of you have or will notice, Macro-Assembler is not complete. I never received the disk with the source on it. In its present state, Macro-Assembler is a runnable program. When the second disk arrives it will be announced. Macro-Assembler will then be sold as a 2 disk set.

c99 anyone? Clint Pulley as been at it again. He now has Release #3 of his "c" language. The newest version is an addition to release #2. It has a new compiler on it and some added functions. The new version is on the way. I'll have it available for the Jan. meeting. For those of you that can't wait, send me an order. Release #3 is on a SS/SD disk and costs $2.00 .

Jim Derk has been keeping himself pretty busy. I just received an update to his MEGALOAD program. MEGALOAD is a supercart program that loads an 8 page menu into the cart's RAM. You then put a disk containing your programs on it into the drive. Now, with as few as 1 or 2 key strokes, your program will load and run. 8 pages of menues that run from Utilities and Communications to Games and TI-Writer. The menu is as simple as 1 2 3 to edit. Jim has included MEGASAVE. This program will allow you to custom design your own menues and save them back to disk. This will come in very handy if you don't have a battery backed up supercart.

How about John Birdwell? John's been pretty busy too. Boy has he given us a good one this time. John's DSKU v3.2 is fantastic. This program will allow you to compare disks, read and write sectors, print single or multiple sectors, find strings within a sector or filename, get disk reports with comments and much much more. You must see this one to believe it. The compare disk feature will dump to your printer all the sectors that are different. John, I can see you put a lot a hard work into this one. Program runs in Xbasic, TIW, E/A and supercart. The supercart version does have some limits. Get 'em now for only $2.00 . Don't forget to send John your contributions.

I received PR BASE v2 in the mail today. I haven't had time to run it to see what's different about it. I am putting it in the library anyway. I'll have a review for you in the next issue. This program is a 2 disk set and will cost $3.00 .

That about does it for this article. I'll see you all at the Dec. meeting and the big Swap Meet. See you then.

CHEAPDISKS

TIRED OF PAYING $4.95 FOR A DISK? by Ollie Hebert

Is paying $16/10 at a local discount house or a similar low price still too much? Can you use 100 DSDD disks (bulk -- no boxes) at an honest 42 cents each or even an honest 33 cents each? These are generic (no manufacturers label) DSDD disks with hub rings, write protect tabs, and sleeves & the above prices include the shipping costs. The cheapest disks that I find in the Sep '86 issue of Computer Shopper ($2.50 at your newsstand) are:

Micro Electronics Inc.	Specify DSDD on orders
1555 W. Lane Ave.	Prices expire 15 Oct '86
Columbus, OH 43221	$29/100, Shp= $4/100 ($3 on 2nd 100)
Ph: 1-800-642-1148 (free)	Visa, Master Card (cost =?)
	Hub rings, WP tabs, sleeves
	MEI's life exchange/money back guar.
Green Tree Computer Supp.	Specify DSDD #GD3 on order
P.O. Box 249	$39/100, Shp= $3/100
11 Osage Rd.	Visa, Master Cd ($2 chg if undr $50)
Rockway, NJ 07866	Hub rings, Labs, WP tabs, tyvek slvs
Ph: 1-800-367-2897 (free)	Life repl warr for manuf defects

I have now formatted 100 of the GT disks ($49/100 when I got mine) and have 100 of the MEI's on order. Most of the GT's were formatted SSSD but 15 or so were formatted DSDD and a few were made into flippies.

I always format my disks with VERIFY turned on, and none of the disks have shown any read errors (bad sectors). I cannot guarantee that you will get the same results. Several of these disks have had extensive use (three in the DSDD format), and I haven't had a single problem. The only doubt that I have about cheap disks is that they are usually audibly noisier than labeled (expensive) disks. Either they aren't polished as well or they don't contain as much head lubricant as the expensive ones. This audible noise may indicate that they cause excessive disk drive head wear. Caveat Emptor (let the buyer beware).

POST SCRIPT: In a letter to the editor Ollie states:

"An update to my CHEAPDISKS item: The 29 cent disks arrived and I have formatted 25 of them in the DSDD format. All verified perfect and the ones that I have used have worked flawlessly."

FYI

From MG news release:

"IBM COMPATIBLITY FOR THE 99/4A

"Awhile back we were contracted by a large US company to design a peice of interface hardware and software for the 99/4A to allow it to use both IBM Hardware and IBM Software. This unit could be thought of as an IBM Expansion System since it will not only allow you to use IBM software but you can also add IBM cards to the system! That's right, now you will be able to run things like Lotus 123, dBase, Microsoft Flight Simulator, Quick Basic, MS-Basic and the Basic Compilers. That is about all we can say at this time. In January 87' this US company will make their announccement as to price and availability."

FROM OTHER ORPHANAGES

Jack Topham

THE LA99er UG passed along the following from PACIFIC BELL TELEPHONE. To disable CALL WAITING while you are on your MODEM, do the following: Lift receiver, listen for dial tone. Dial on touch phone or 1170 on a rotary dial phone. Wait for a second dial tone and place your call. When you hang up CALL WAITING is active again.
They also provided a tip on how to print DM 1000 output in condensed print. This is from Don Brouillard. For reference see page 17 of DM 1000 Docs. For an EPSON, TI, or GEMINI 10/15 printer use: 15 27 71 27 48 *. Note the space between control codes and the asterisk. Thanx Don.

An article by Ken Hamai in the FOREST LANE UG NEWSLETTER gave details on how to protect your TI99 from power line voltage surges. For the leary, buy one at RADIO SHACK for about $9. For the expert, again go to RADIO SHACK and buy one or two MOV devices at $1.69 each. If you buy one, wire across the the two power wires on the system side of any fuse or circuit breaker. If you have a three wire unit, then wire the second MOV from the HOT lead to the ground pin. There is 117v between these two as well as between the two power leads. Again after the fuse or circuit breaker. No excuse now to loose your system to a power surge. RADIO SHACK also has ready made protectors for you MODEM as well. About $12.

The OTTAWA TI99 UG has a TIP for the hardware hacker that wants MONOCHROME on his monitor. The addition of a small capacitor wired across L202(a small coil called an inductor) will kill the color burst signal and you will have monochrome (no color). Using a small SPST switch will allow either mode of operation. So back to RADIO SHACK. 100PF capacitor PN 272-152 70 cents and a switch PN 275-152 $1.69 is all you need plus a little wire. Wire the switch and capacitor in series across the inductor. One end of L202 can be located at PIN 36 of V100 (9918A video processor chip). Mount the switch thru one of the air slots at the upper right edge of the console.
I'll report next month on how well it worked.

The COLUMBUS, OHIO UG explained how to use TI WRITER to create a file to use with a SMART MODEM and Fast Term (or Mass Transfer). Just create a file where the needed response to each querry is on a line by itself. NO CONTROL codes please (Use PF vs SF). Save to disk under an appropriate filename like CUG. Both programs offer single line "SEND FILE" which is used to send the responses one at a time as they are requested. It works! Try it!
On Fast Term it is FCTN N. On Mass Transfer it is FCTN 7 then U. Read the DOCS!

CALL SOUNDS of CENTRAL WESTCHESTER explains how to print a program listing in 28 columns to match the screen display.

```
>OPEN #6:"PIO"
>PRINT #6:CHR$(27);CHR$(81);CHR$(28)
```

>LIST "PIO"

You can change the line length by changing the 28 in the second line to 40 or 56 or 64, etc.

The GREAT LAKES UG reminds us that you can print the DM 1000 disk catalog using FCTN 7 if you have set the printer default as required. Read the DOCS!

TI EXTENDED BASIC only $29.95 in the TRITON fall 1986 catalog. No excuse left now. While they last!

The RIVERSIDE (CA) UG warns of a program floating around called SUPERTRACK. It seems to be track copier but it is really a cleaver DISK EATER. It does your drive no good as well. Be warned. Be suspicious when a copy program wants you to remove the write protect tape from the master disk. There are dangerous jerks out there!

The WILL COUNTY UG NEWSLETTER passed along this TIP. If the TI WRITER use of @ and & for underline and double print then change them. Use a sector editor on FORMA1 and find the string 23 21 40 26. Change the 40 26 to 60 5C. Now FCTN C will will double strike and FCTN Z will underline. Try it, it works.

The SUNCOAST BEEPER addresses the OLE MULTI-PLAN locked cell dilemma . How do you unlock them? First see MP DOCS pg 162. Then read this "NEVER, NEVER, NEVER LOCK CELLS UNLESS YOU ARE SAVING TEM FOR POSTERITY..."
Maybe one of our MP experts would like to speak up.

The NEW JERSEY UG reports a new calculator from CASIO for the programmer. $25 and it provides normal AND,OR,XOR,NOT functions and also ROTATE, SHIFT, AND NEG. Words can be signed or unsigned. Values can be viewed as binary, octal,decimal, or hex and mixed in calculations. The new CM100 appears to be a very useful tool for the serious programmer. It can be ordered directly by phone (800) 553-3338 X34

The UG in CHAMPAIGN suggests using FCTN+SPACE+J with one hand vs FCTN+4 to CLEAR. It works!

INFORMATION WE PROMISED

THE FAIRE OPEN FORUM'S INFO SHARE

During the Faire we had an open forum for the visiting TI users groups, and there were some requests for some information that I have gathered as an officer of this group. I was asked for the name and number of the person I contacted for the mailing list of the 99/4A owners in our area. The name of the person that was most helpful was:

Ms. Rosanne Frigo
TEXAS INSTRUMENTS Inc.
P.O. Box 225621
Mail Station 3654
Dallas, Texas 75265
Phone # (214) 997- 2444

The second piece of information concerned the name, address, and phone of the insurance company that our group uses for coverage of the Faire and our regular meetings. The information for the firm is :

FRAZIER and EVANS Inc.
P.O. Box 1427
Aurora, Illinois 60507
Phone # (3

UPGRADE YOUR DISK SYSTEM

Ollie Hébert

UPGRADE YOUR DISK SYSTEM By Ollie Hebert

The TI disk controller can control up to three drives in the single density (SD) format. The drives themselves may be either single sided (SS) or double sided (DS). The drive that TI supplied is a Shugart 400-L which is single sided single density (SSSD). The drives may actually be double density (DD) but must be used as SD with the TI controller.

These S's and D's are getting me confused. Here is a chart:

SSSD = Single Sided Single Density, stores 90k.
DSSD = Double Sided Single Density, stores 180k.
SSDD = Single Sided Double Density, stores 180k.
DSDD = Double Sided Double Density, stores 360k.
DSQD = Double Sided Quad Density, stores 720k.

Both CorComp and Myarc market disk controllers ($160-$180) that can control up to 4 drives in any of the first four formats. Recently, Myarc has anounced a Quad Density (QD) upgrade for their controller. My change was from the TI to the CorComp controler. I have no personal experience with the Myarc unit so cannot report on it. The CorComp unit has functioned perfectly.

As a first step in upgrading your disk system, you can simply replace your TI drive with a DSSD or DSDD full height drive. In either case, you will have DSSD (180k) capability when using the TI controller. Two advertisers in Computer Shopper ($2.50 on your newsstand) advertise the DSDD full height MPI drive for $40. You can then change to the CorComp or Myarc controller at a later time and get the full DSDD use of the drive. The new controller won't magically give you DSDD capability from a lesser drive, though. You could start with a single half height drive but will have to fill the blank half with smething. A piece of 2X4 is too small and a brick is too gritty. Use your ingenuity.

Many TI users have upgraded to a pair of half height DSDD drives within

the Peripheral Expansion Box (PEB). If you can afford to, purchase a modification kit that contains a pair of drives, the necessary cables, and a mounting kit. Following the instructions with the kit should get the job done with minimal trouble. If you have some technical savvy and are willing to risk your money and system to your own hands, continue reading for the method that has been passed on to me by others that have done it.

Basically, you have two choices as to which drives to purchase. Some people prefer a certain brand because it is whisper quiet or because they like the particular type of door latch. With the TI PEB in consideration, only so much power is available. You will have to either (A) purchase a pair of low power requirement drives or you will have to (B) upgrade the -12v regulator in the PEB to at least 3 amps. I chose to use low power drives.

Your new drives must be IBM PC or Shugart compatible. Apple, Atari, or Commodore drives won't work. The only half height drives that I am aware of that are also low power units are the Shugart SA-455-2 and the Teac FD-55B (or FD-55BV). Surely there must be other brands available. These drives range in price from $90 to $150. The half height QumeTrak 142 drive often sells as low as $60 but they require the regulator change. Anyone that has installed a pair of any other brand of drives without having to modify the PEB is encouraged to add that brand to my meager list.

The following is an accounting of how I installed a pair of Teac FD-55BV drives in my PEB. Almost all of the information is actually from others. This is simply a report. Modification of the power supply is not covered as it was unnecessary.

1: Read all of the article and obtain the necessary tools and parts before beginning. If you are at all wary about this project, please disregard it and purchase the complete kit.

2: Remove power to the PEB, unplug the power cord at both ends and wait two minutes before opening the lid. Yeah, both ends. You want to live to enjoy the new drives, don't you? Remove the 2 screws holding the drive in the case. Slide the drive out and remove both cables from it. Try to remove the 34 pin data cable from the disk controller card. After trying, you know why I said "try". Anyway, you must gently work at it until it comes off.

3: On the new drives, set the drive select DIP switches or jumpers, relocate all necessary shorting plugs, and remove the resistor pack if required. For my Teac FD-55BV drives, I closed DIP switch DS0 in drive #1 and closed DIP switch DS1 in drive #2. Otherwise, DS0 to DS3 must be open. I also moved the shorting plug from XT to IU on both drives. I did not remove either resistor pack but have been told that I should have removed one (either one) but not both of them. This information is probably invalid with any other brand of drive. For accurate information, you must find someone who has done a sucessful installation with the same drives that you are using.

4: Install your 4 pin Y power cable between the old connector and both drives. You could have purchased it (about $5) or built it from 1 male and 2 female disk drive power connectors. 4-6 inches of 22 gauge wire is about the best choice per leg. The connectors look like standard

Molex connectors but aren't. This cable is the most critical part of this procedure. The inside pins are ground and the outside pins are +5V and -12V. Get them wrong and you will probably kiss your money goodby. I highly recommend that this item be purchased as an assembled unit. It is much easier to assemble it wrong than right. Double and triple check your work. Then get a technician to verify correctness. It HAS to be perfect before installation.

5: Modify your old 34 pin data cable and install it on the drives. I used a Radio Shack 276-1564A 4 Position Card Edge Connector (IDC type) which was $5. This is the only unkeyed connector that you will be working with. Temporarily attach the original data cable to one drive so that the cable exits toward the second drive. With the drives side by side, measure exactly where you want the new conector added. You must leave a little slack between the drives for easy removal. Don't leave too much slack as the cable will then be too short to reach the controller card. Remove the cable and crimp the new connector to the cable using slip-joint pliers (long nosed pliers are unsuitable). The connector must be attached securely and evenly. Install the data cable on both drives. Alternately, you could build a new cable from 20" of 34 conductor ribbon cable, one IDS (Pin Socket) connector and two IDC (Edge Connector) connectors. Installation would be much easier than with the original 14" connector. Do not install this new unkeyed cable upside down.

6: If you are changing to a new controller, swap them now. Some people like to use slot 7 rather than 8 as this gives them a little more room to remove the data cable the next time around.

7: Position the drives so that the write protect sensor is at the top. A third or fourth appendage is helpful for the next step. Put the data cable into the PEB and slide the drives up as close as you can get them. Now, snake the data cable through the slot in the back and connect it to the disk controller card. The connector is keyed, so you wil probably have it upside down on the first attempt.

8: Slide the drives into the PEB and secure in the best way that you can. The threads are different, so don't try to reuse the old screws. You may be able to purchase some sort of kit for this. I used a black marker to darken the edges of three pieces of lint free cardboard and put one between the drives and one on each outer side of the drives. If I transported my unit, I would have to make a better arrangement.

9: Close the top, reattach the power cord and check it out. Two drives with a new controller is the best thing that has happened to my TI since I replaced the TI blower (Tremendous Irritator) with a muffin fan. My unit is enclosed in a desk and neither the fan nor the drive modifications have given any trouble. The fan was installed several months ago and the new controller and drives one month ago. I use the system at least a few hours daily and it is often in use 12 or more hours at a time on weekends. If I could only find a permanent fix for the GROM port on my spare console that causes lockups...

THE BASIC ASSEMBLER

Steve Peacock

T H E B A S I C A S S E M B L E R #1 By Steve Peacock

FILL SCREEN WITH QUESTION MARKS THEN ERASE THEM

This is the first of many (I hope) articles that will help you learn how to program in TI assembly. What I will do is present a short idea in TI Basic and the same idea in TI Assembly. These will not be a 'game' or a 'utility' but will be an idea that you can use to create you own long program. One of the first things you must know is how the screen is addressed. There are 768 positions, starting at the upper left corner with 0 and ending in the bottom right corner with 767. If you want to print a letter on the screen in assembly you give the screen address (0 to 767). Here is a chart showing the location. Please save this chart for future reference.

```
  0 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *  15 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *  31
 32 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *  47 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *  63
 64 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *  79 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *  95
 96 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 111 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 127
128 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 143 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 159
160 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 175 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 191
192 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 207 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 223
224 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 239 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 255
256 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 271 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 287
288 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 303 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 319
320 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 335 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 351
352 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 367 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 383
384 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 399 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 415
416 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 431 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 447
448 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 463 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 479
480 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 495 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 511
512 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 527 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 543
544 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 559 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 575
576 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 591 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 607
608 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 623 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 639
640 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 655 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 671
672 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 687 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 703
704 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 719 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 735
736 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 751 * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * 767
```

The first program example I will present is how to fill the screen with a character, and then erase that character.

I will assume that you know how to load and run a Basic program and not explain that. I will explain how to use the TI Assembler.

Put the Assembler cartridge in, and the disk in your drive, power up and select 1 for EDIT then 2 for EDIT. Press FCTN X and then type your program. Now you

are ready to save, to do this press FCTN 9 then FCTN 9. Select 3 for SAVE. Answer Y for the question 'DV80?'. Next you will need to give a file name. I try to end the file name with an 'S' to signify 'source' code. Now press FCTN 9 to return to the main EA screen. Select 2 for Assemble. With the disk in your drive answer Y to the question 'load assembler', then type your source file name and then a NEW name for the 'object' code. I try to end the name with an 'O'. Next you will be asked for a list file, for now just press ENTER. For options press 'R' and then ENTER. At this point the assembler will take over. If you do not have any errors you will be told, if you have errors you must go back and edit the source code. If no errors press ENTER then 3 for load and run. Type your object file name then ENTER for the next name just press ENTER. For the program name type and enter the name you gave as the start in the source code. The program will then run.

```
********************************************************************************

100 REM PROGRAM BA1B==>Basic Assembler #1 Basic Version
110 REM FILL SCREEN WITH QUESTION MARKS THEN ERASE THEM
120 REM (C)1985 S. PEACOCK
130 QM$="?"
140 SP$=" "
150 FOR ROW=1 TO 24
160 FOR COLUMN=1 TO 32
170 CALL HCHAR(ROW,COLUMN,ASC(QM$))
180 NEXT COLUMN
190 NEXT ROW
200 FOR ROW=1 TO 24
210 FOR COLUMN=1 TO 32
220 CALL HCHAR(ROW,COLUMN,ASC(SP$))
230 NEXT COLUMN
240 NEXT ROW
250 GOTO 150
260 END

********************************************************************************

********************************************************************************
*
*PROGRAM BA1A==>Basic Assembler #1 Assembly Version
*FILL SCREEN WITH QUESTION MARKS THEN ERASES THEM
*(C)1985 S. PEACOCK
*
********************************************************************************
       REF  VMBW          *REFERENCE TO VDP MULTIPLE BYTE WRITE
       DEF  START         *DEFINE THE START OF THE PROGRAM (CAN BE ANY NAME)
QM     TEXT '?'           *TEXT TO PRINT '?' TO SCREEN
SP     TEXT ' '           *TEXT TO PRINT SPACE TO SCREEN
START  LI   R0,0          *LOAD IMMEDIATE REG. 0 WITH START POSITION-ZERO
LOOP1  LI   R1,QM         *LOAD IMMEDIATE REG. 1 WITH TEXT TO PRINT
       LI   R2,1          *LOAD IMMEDIATE REG. 2 WITH # OF BYTES TO PRINT-ONE
       BLWP @VMBW         *BRANCH AND LOAD WORKSPACE POINTER AT VMBW
       INC  R0            *INCREMENT REG. 0 BY 1 (THE POSITION TO PRINT)
       CI   R0,767        *COMPARE REG. 0 WITH 767 (THE LAST SCREEN POSITION)
       JLE  LOOP1         *JUMP IF LESS OR EQUAL TO LOOP1 THEN PRINT THE NEXT '?'
*****************************IF GREATER THAN MOVE TO THE ERASE PART OF PROGRAM
       LI   R0,0          ***
LOOP2  LI   R1,SP         *THE SAME THING ONLY PRINT A
       LI   R2,1          *BLANK SPACE ON THE SCREEN
```

```
       BLWP @VMBW          ***
       INC  R0             ***
       CI   R0,767         ***
       JLE  LOOP2          ***
       JMP  START          *WHEN DONE THIS JUMPS TO START (ENDLESS LOOP)
* ALWAYS END WITH THE 'END' STATEMENT
       END
```

- - - - - - - - - -

T H E B A S I C A S S E M B L E R #2 BY Steve Peacock

PRINT MESSAGE ON SCREEN THEN CHANGE FOREGROUND AND BACKGROUND COLOR

This month we will print a message on the screen and then change the foreground and background colors. To change the color of each of the character sets in Assembly you must write one byte to the proper location. If the Assembly program is entirely in Assembly the color table is in one location. However if the Assembly program is called from BASIC the color table is in a different location. Below is a table that gives the set and the location of the color table.

SET	CHARACTERS	ASSEMBLY LOCATION	CALLED FROM BASIC LOCATION
0	24-31	>0383	>030F
1	32-39	>0384	>0310
2	40-47	>0385	>0311
3	48-55	>0386	>0312
4	56-63	>0387	>0313
5	64-71	>0388	>0314
6	72-79	>0389	>0315
7	80-87	>038A	>0316
8	88-95	>038B	>0317
9	96-103	>038C	>0318
10	104-111	>038D	>0319
11	112-119	>038E	>031A
12	120-127	>038F	>031B
13	128-135	>0390	>031C
14	136-143	>0391	>031D
15	144-151	>0392	>031E
16	152-159	>0393	>031F

This month I have introduced the character '>'. In TI Assembly this makes a number a HexDecimal (base 16). If it is not used then the number is a Decimal (base 10). TI Assembly can use both of these. Please note that ONLY 4 digits can be used. This means that the largest a decimal number can be is 9999. The largest a hexdecimal number can be is >FFFF. This is 65535 in decimal. If this number (>FFFF) is put in a delay loop an Assembly program will pause for about one second!

Each color is given one digit to designate it's color (0-F). These are:

```
TRANSPARENT..0   BLACK........1   MEDIUM GREEN.2   LIGHT GREEN..3
DARK BLUE....4   LIGHT BLUE...5   DARK RED.....6   CYAN.........7
MEDIUM RED...8   LIGHT RED....9   DARK YELLOW..A   LIGHT YELLOW.B
DARK GREEN...C   MAGENTA......D   GRAY.........E   WHITE........F
```


The foreground is the first digit with the background the second digit, 2 zeros are added as padding. Example >7E00 is Cyan on Gray. If >7E00 is written to address >0389 then the characters 72-79 (H-O) will be Cyan on a Gray background.

```
############################################################################

100 REM PROGRAM BA2B==>Basic Assembler #2 Basic Version.
110 REM PRINT MESSAGE ON SCREEN THEN CHANGE FOREGROUND AND BACKGROUND COLOR
120 REM (C)1985 S. PEACOCK
130 REM YOU MAY WANT A 'CALL CLEAR' HERE
140 MSG1$="WEST JAX 99ERS"
150 MSG2$="TI-99/4A FOREVER"
160 DISPLAY AT(12,8):MSG1$
170 DISPLAY AT(14,7):MSG2$
180 CALL COLOR(2,7,15,3,7,15,4,7,15,5,7,15,6,7,15,7,7,15,8,7,15)
190 CALL COLOR(2,15,7,3,15,7,4,15,7,5,15,7,6,15,7,7,15,7,8,15,7)
200 GOTO 180
210 END

############################################################################

****************************************************************************
*
*PROGRAM BA2A==>Basic Assembler #2 Assembly Version
*PRINT MESSAGE ON SCREEN THEN CHANGES FOREGROUND AND BACKGROUND COLOR
*(C)1985 S. PEACOCK
*
****************************************************************************
       REF  VMBW           *REFERENCE TO VDP MULT. BYTE WRITE
       DEF  START          *DEFINE START OF PROGRAM (MAY BE ANY WORD)
MSG1   TEXT 'WEST JAX 99ERS'     *FIRST MESSAGE TO PRINT
MSG2   TEXT 'TI-99/4A FOREVER'   *SECOND MESSAGE TO PRINT
*****PRINT MESSAGES ON SCREEN
START  LI   R0,361         *LOAD REG. 0 WITH POSITION TO PRINT MESSAGE #1
       LI   R1,MSG1        *LOAD REG. 1 WITH THE MESSAGE #1
       LI   R2,14          *NUMBER OF BYTES (LETTERS) TO PRINT
       BLWP @VMBW          *BRANCH AND LOAD WORKSPACE POINTER AT VMBW
       LI   R0,424         *LOAD REG. 0 WITH POSITION TO PRINT MESSAGE #2
       LI   R1,MSG2        *LOAD REG. 1 WITH MESSAGE #2
       LI   R2,16          *NUMBER OF BYTES (LETTERS) TO PRINT
       BLWP @VMBW          *BRANCH AND LOAD WORKSPACE POINTER AT VMBW
*****CHANGE COLOR OF LETTERS
       LI   R0,>0385       *START ADDRESS OF SETS TO CHANGE
REDO   LI   R1,DRG         *DATA FOR DARK RED ON GRAY
       LI   R2,7           *LOAD REG. 2 WITH # OF BYTES TO WRITE (7 SETS)
       BLWP @VMBW          *BRANCH AND LOAD WORKSPACE VDP MULT. BYTE WRITE
       LI   R1,GDR         *CHANGE TO GRAY ON DARK RED
       BLWP @VMBW          *BRANCH TO MULT BYTE WRITE
       JMP  REDO           *JUMP BACK AND REDO THE COLOR CHANGE
DRG    DATA >6E6E,>6E6E,>6E6E,>6E00  *DARK RED ON GRAY DATA 00 FOR PADDING
GDR    DATA >E6E6,>E6E6,>E6E6,>E600  *GRAY ON DARK RED DATA 00 FOR PADDING
       END
```

FAIRE REVIEW OFF COMPUSERVE

Observations from The TI Fair by Ron Albright Copyright 1986

Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary:

"cult" (F L; F culte, L cultus meaning "care, adoration", "to cultivate") - a great devotion

For some time I have noticed an interesting trend in the TI community. It has been the progression toward what I like to call "cultism". Despite the negative connotation of the word "cult" (from the legacy of Jim Jones and "yuppies"), I like the trend. Like the Trekies of the seventies which held well-attended conventions of that shows devotees years after the program was off the air, the TI users are becoming cultists. In my way of thinking, cultists are committed, dedicated and forever. Despite the undeniable fact that the computer industry has left the 99/4A in the dark ages in many capabilities, it, because of the cultists, will never really die. Sandy Bartels, the vice-president of the Chicago Users Group put it quite nicely when she observed that despite the fact that her group's members sometimes sell their computers to either go to another machine or give up on computers, the machines almost always sell and, then, those who buy them, become new activists. Group members, anxious to learn and progress with their new machines. It is a never-ending infusion of new, excitable users that keep the cult alive.

Why a cult?

What is the difference between a cult and just a user base? Several things come to mind. At the recent 4th Annual TI Fair in Chicago, cult behavior was everywhere. You know you are in a cult when some of the hottest sales items were identifying memorabilia - buttons, t-shirts, bumper stickers, and hats. You know you are in a cult when folks are attending and asking questions at a hardware seminar on how to weld and resolder chips and such in consoles and cartridges and not asking questions about loading and running programs from cassette. You know you are in cult when you start having bona fide "personalties" - fair-goers were actively seeking out to shake the hand of, take the picture of or have their pictures taken with the Paul Charltons, the Clint Pulleys, the Barry Travers, the Peter Hoddies (particularly after his rousing music demonstration), and other "names" in the TI world. Even autograph seekers were out in force. You know you are in a cult when 1000 or so people attend a fair in the rain and cold of a Chicago Saturday not just locally, but from as far away as California, Georgia, New York and Canada. You know you are in a cult when you sit and have a cup of coffee and watch folks leaving the fair with plastic bags full of new software and hardware (and memorabilia). Its an amazing thing to watch, these cults. And a fun thing to be a part of.

The numbers game...

The 1985 Fair drew, reportedly, 2000 or so people. This year's Fair drew between 900 and a thousand. Is that a sign of a decline in the cult? Not at all. There are several key things to note. First, the weather. We are talking miserable, folks, with a capital "M". That surely kept lots of local people, not cultists (yet) at home.

Secondly, talk to the vendors. Those that came to the show came with spent money. Lots of money. These are the serious users. In a cult, give me 900 fanatics over 2000 "interested participants" any day. So, no, I don't think the decline in absolute numbers is an indication in any way that the cult is weakening. If anything, the quality of the attendees was strong evidence that the TI users are as strong as ever.

The Faire Itself...

The doors of the Faire opened at 9:00 am on a wet, blustery Chicago Saturday. The presentations led off at 10:30 with Chris Bobbitt of Asgard demonstrating some of that firms newest software - "Total Filer", a unique, text-oriented database program from Warren Agee, and "High Gravity", a game and learning tool from Tom Wibel. Both of these fine programs are written in c99. At 11:00, Clint Pulley gave an excellent talk on the C language, as a whole, and c99, Clint's creation, specifically. Then at lunch, there was an informal discussion of the attending user group officers on the trials and tribulations of user group officers, led by the Chicago User Group. The afternoon was started off with a bang as Lou Phillips showed the Myarc 9640 computer (I understand "Geneve" has been dropped as a name as HP already has a "Geneva" portable on the market, but this is strictly unofficial). It will be ready RSN ("Real Soon Now"). The hangup now being the late shipment of the "Gate Arrays" from Mitsubishi. There was an excellent hardware "hackin'" seminar following by Al Stump of the Chicago UG. He showed, with some well-done slides, how to make a "super-cartridge" and other hardware tricks. He said he hoped to make the slides available to other UG's through Chicago soon. The, to me, came the highlight of the entire fair. J. Peter Hoddie, one of the brightest stars on the TI horizon, gave a rousing music demonstration using two consoles synchronized to play music with one console "directing" the other. An incredible thing to hear. The, Peter played a cello to a computer "piano" accompaniment. Absolutely marvelous. Peter also announced that he and Barry Traver would be forming a new venture to produce software and hardware (an 8-port cartridge board was displayed as one possibility). The seminars were closed out by Franz Waggenbach's demonstration of the German 80 column device and assorted other hardware.

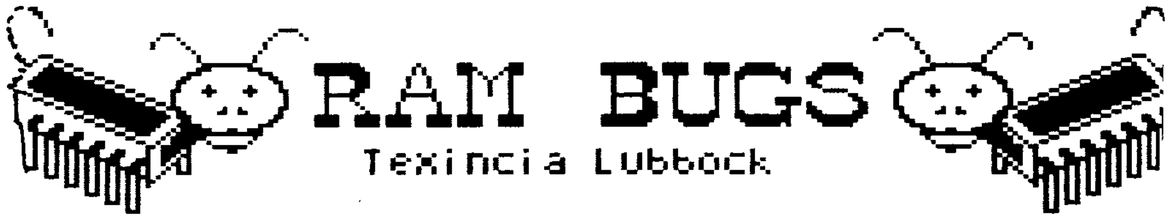
On the floor...

There were some 40 or so tables and 30 or so firms selling an incredible array of software and hardware. New products were all over the place. At the Hunter Electronics table, Mike McCann (author of "Business Graphs 99"), introduced his new "Printer's Apprentice", a "Print Shop-like" program. At the same time, Asgard Software was previewing J. Peter Hoddie's new "Font Writer", which is a graphics program that can use Artist and Graphx fonts and graphics and mix text with it. Disk-Only Software announced the publication of a new manual called the "Orphan's Survival Handbook", which will be a unique anthology of both the "Best Of" the TI user group newsletters as well as some brand new material from some of the brightest in the TI community. Databiotics showed the Pilot language they have long promised. I saw the new keyboards from Rave 99 and they were an interesting concept for those interested in an IBM-style user-interface. And more things that I never got the chance to see, as I was busy putting faces with names and shaking lots of hands that I had looked forward to shaking for some time. It was the atmosphere of

a celebration and a carnival. Exciting and lively. Incredible for sure.

What next?

I came away with a strange sense of invigoration and rejuvenation. Judging from what I saw in Chicago, the TI community is alive and well. Not as large for sure, but, quantity has been traded for quality. Sophistication and dedication now rule and it is obviously accelerating product development on all fronts. I enjoyed the Fair and agree with Art Byers. When a Fair is happening near you - be it Boston, Los Angeles, Seattle, TICOFF, or wherever - go to it. You meet the nicest people there.



I suppose a great many of you wondered where I was in last months issue? Think back, if you will, to the wonderful summer I spent roller skating across the country... There were a few people who showed the courtesy of providing me with places to stay during that vacation and last month it was my turn to return the favor. Computers, after all, cannot be allowed to dominate one's life. Guy's, remember that the next time your wife begins to forget you exist because your spending more time with the *TI* than with your family. Now, time for some *CONGRATULATIONS!*

The first of which is two-fold, to *PAM and BUZZ* on the purchase of their new house -- (I've already taken the liberty to notify the *ELK GROVE VILLAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT* to expect a wild time from their household this holiday season -- can't be too careful when someone who smokes gum move into the neighborhood.); but more importantly to *GRANDMA and GRANDPA KRANTZ* on the birth of their *first GRANDSON*, a *NINE AND ONE-HALF POUND BABY BOY BORN IN FULL LEATHER* (will he get a motorcycle for his first or second Christmas, Buzz?)

"CHICAGO POLICE/FIRE EMERGENCY, THIS IS OFFICER BEHNKE, HOW MAY I HELP YOU?" No!, the above sentence is *NOT* a misprint! Our own *JOHN BEHNKE* finally graduated from the *CHICAGO POLICE ACADEMY* and is now a *FULL FLEDGED CHICAGO POLICE OFFICER!* Guess that means we'd all better be on our best behavior from now on.

Congratulations are also in order to *SANDY BARTELS* for the FINE JOB she did in organizing this year's *4TH ANNUAL CHICAGO TI FAIRE* (aka: *HANDS ACROSS THE USER'S GROUP*). With the assistance of everyone involved, this years *FAIRE* was bigger and better than any previous year. A lot of people did a lot of hard and sometimes dirty work for the benefit of our group. Every *I* talked at the *FAIRE* was having a wonderful time. Some wanted to know what we were planning for *NEXT YEAR*! I have no doubt the *FIFTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION* will be even better.

Speaking of the *FAIRE*, I couldn't help but notice the previously

obscure *SAM PINCUS (here boy, want a hot dog, boy -- where's the dunk tank, boy?)* when he materialized at the door with his wife, *NANCY*. *NANCY* did a wonderful job taking care of the group's memorabilia booth. I only wish I could have spent more time talking with her, but she was extremely busy most of the time.

I have decided we should get *HANK ELLERMAN* a set of *ROLLER SKATES* to use at next years faire. Poor *HANK* was *RUNNING ALL OVER THE PLACE* making sure everyone had everything they needed for whatever they were doing. Maybe next year we could give *DON JONES* some of *HANK'S* responsibilities so he wouldn't have to sit so long.

I recall a time when the only computer that was capable of playing music of any kind, was the *APPLE*. When I purchased my *TI*, I was not too surprised to learn that it, too, could play music when programed to do so. The demonstration at the *FAIRE*, however, surpassed my wildest imagination! I don't think the *TI* will ever compete for space in *ORCHESTRA HALL*, but *J. PETER HODDIE'S* exhibit of the machines extended capabilities was truly inspirational.

The photographs which appear in this issue are courtesy of *RICH KLEIN*. I saw him up on the balcony several times. I kept hoping my makeup was all right, *RICH*, but alas there were no close-ups of me. I think, however, that I spotted my silhouette in one of the crowd pictures. Next year, I'll have to make myself more prevalent when the camera is around.

MIKE CHAPPELL did a really nice job of reproducing our *CHICAGO TI USER'S GROUP LOGO* in wood. I was impressed to walk thru the door and see his fine craftsmanship on the easel.

What do you get when you cross a *TEACHER, ENGINEER, SOFTWARE CONSULTANT, PSYCHOLOGIST, ACCOUNTANT, MECHANIC, STUDENT, COP, FAMILY ENGINEERING CONSULTANT, and various other professions*? -- The *BOARD OF DIRECTORS of the CHICAGO TI USER'S GROUP*! These are some of the kinds of people who help determine what direction our group will grow in. Why am I bringing this to your attention? Because your input is needed at the *DECEMBER MEETING* to help elect the next *PRESIDENT*.

BUTCH GOLDSTEIN (he's the ENGINEER and OUT-GOING PRESIDENT) has helped further this group's national expansion. We now have hundreds of members from *OUTSIDE THE CHICAGO AREA*. After lengthy conversations with *SANDY BARTELS (she's the FAMILY ENGINEERING CONSULTANT and current VICE-PRESIDENT)* I personally feel that *SANDY'S* push will be to further the *INTERNATIONAL* expansion of the group. Unless someone can offer a candidate with better qualifications and experience, I would recommend your vote be for *SANDY*.

REMEMBER PEOPLE, THIS IS YOUR GROUP -- PARTICIPATE!

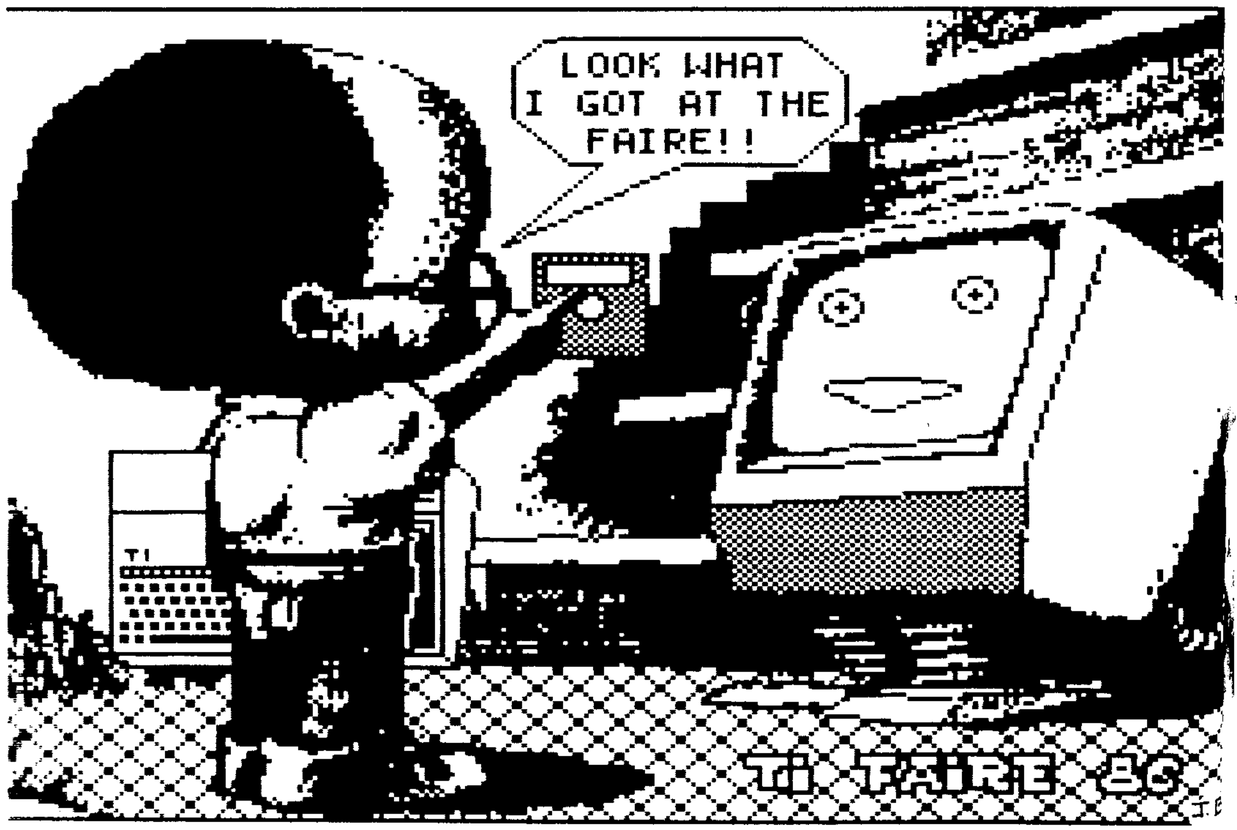
Some people have approached me concerning next months *TI SWAP MEET* scheduled to take place after the *ELECTIONS* at next months meeting. I took the liberty of contacting the *RIVER GROVE POLICE DEPARTMENT*, and they assured me that anyone trying to sell their body at the meeting would be arrested. So, I guess that leaves only unwanted and unused computer equipment and peripherals on the list. This will also be and excellent time for those who wanted to sell at the *FAIRE* but were declined in order not to step on any vendors toes.

Looking back over the past couple of years, I can't help but wonder if the *CORPORATE HIERARCHY* at *TEXAS INSTRUMENTS* have any regrets at

the decisions they made. How much would longer would they have raped the public by over charging for the software they were producing? Would the machine *(the 99/4-A)* be as vital as it is today, or would it be lost in the jungle of competition as so many of the once popular machines are now lost in the efforts of *"BIGGER AND BETTER"* or *"FASTER"*? OR! Would many of us have gone the way of another machine; perhaps one that is "more compatible"? The market place has been volatile for several years now. What once was a sure thing in the world of computers is now as unknown as what will happen to any of us tomorrow. But the TI LIVES!

KAPLAN didn't survive. Perhaps it was because he thought too much like the people at *TEXAS INSTRUMENTS* thought -- perhaps it was because collectively they were too greedy. Perhaps the *TI 99-4/A* - the machine that so many people had so little respect for - has survived because it's a machine that reflects the attitudes of its users. Users who are not lost is a world of "BIGGER AND BETTER", but who deal every day with the realities of the world around them -- capable of enjoying their lives as much as anyone else, but practical too!

With those thought in mind, I wish you a safe and happy Holiday Season! See you next year, if not at the meeting.



Introducing
the greatest thing for 99/4A computer graphics since, well, the introduction of the 99/4A!

For years TI-99/4A owners have looked longingly at programs such as Printshop (R) and Newsroom (R) for Apple, Atari and Commodore computers. We all have wished we could do the things that Fontrix (R) does on the IBM PC. Well, now there is a program for the TI-99/4A that does these things, and because of the special features of the 99/4A, does a whole lot more.

Font Writer, by J. Peter Hoddie (a master programmer — author of Pre-Scan it! and system software for the Myarc Geneve computer) makes text and graphics come truly together for the first time on the 99/4A. Font Writer will combine any TI-Writer text files, TI-Artist or CSGD fonts, and TI-Artist instances the way you want them to make an otherwise drab report, letter or article come alive!

Font Writer, like TI-Writer, is more then one program. The first program in the package is Font Editor — a program that will let you edit existing TI-Artist or CSGD fonts, or create new ones from scratch. Font Editor contains an innovative editing window, dozens of powerful menu-selectable utilities, and supports even more powerful user-defined macro drawing commands for drawing often used figures with a single command. As powerful as it is, like all Asgard products it's designed to be friendly and easy-to-use. It is so flexible that you can even edit TI-Artist instances.

The real power of Font Writer, and it's most innovative part, is the Text Formatter. This program accepts standard TI-Writer files with virtually every imbedded text formatting command supported by TI-Writer, along with many new such commands for graphics support, to allow you to integrate text fully with graphics easily. Text Formatter accepts new commands for printing text in different fonts, including pictures and other graphics, and more. This easy-to-use program is as simple to use as TI-Writer, yet does so much more.

The last, but not in any way least program in the Font Writer package is a powerful organization tool for graphics files. If you have ever tried ordering and maintaining TI-Artist fonts, slides, instances and pictures, you will later wonder why you ever tried without it.

Font Writer requires Extended BASIC, 32K, and a disk drive system. TI-Writer and TI-Artist are highly recommended. Extensive documentation by Walter Howe is included. Available for a suggested price of $24.95 from official Asgard Software dealers, from Teledata*Guide on Compuserve (page TDG-4), by sending Source Mail to TI9720 on Source, or directly from Asgard. All major credit cards accepted.

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PO BOX 578341
CHICAGO, IL 60657

FIRST CLASS MAIL
DATED MATERIAL
DO NOT DELAY

REMarks: Carole Goldstein

Normally, I do not write my column until I have finished putting the newsletter together. Today, however, one day after the FAIRE, I am so excited about the incredible success yesterday that I have to get a few words down on paper. The level of excitement at the FAIRE was something that had to be seen to be believed. At no time in the history of the 99/4A computer has there been such advanced hardware and software available. Everywhere you would look there would be something new for this machine.

At the FAIRE I was handed a number of disks full of newsletter contributions from people all over the nation. There was a tremendous amount of useful information on these disks. Among other things were a great many product reviews defininely of value to the Holiday shopper. This along with the wealth of new items seen at the FAIRE has inspired me to try to put together a SUPER WINTER ISSUE. I hope that the many reviews contained herein will help our readers create their wish lists.

Thanks go especially to Ollie Hebert (pronounce A-bare) (I appologize for any past errors), to Bill Gaskill, and to Steve Peacock. Ollie has become a regular contributer, sending disks to us every month from Brewton, Alabama. Bill, from Grand Junction, Colorado, has sent a number of articles, some of which you will also see in next month's issue. And Steve's Basic Assembler series will run for about the next 8 months. A copy of the complete series of articles has also been submitted to the library. We appreciate the sharing of information and all the work that went into the writing of your articles.

And special thanks also go out to all the regulars who month after month take time out of their busy schedules to get their articles to me. I hope you all know how very much this is appreciated by the TI world. Articles from our newsletter have been printed in others all around the country.

Anyone else who wishes to share any knowledge they may have about the 99/4A please send disk or printout to me at the Users Group address or upload your artcles to the UGBBS. Thanks. See you at the meeting.